■ LIFESTYLE / C1

2bU's gloom, doom list for '05: Top 10 scariest scenarios

■ BUSINESS / B1

State-owned mining firm plans IPO to raise funds for Mindanao projects

■ NEWS / A2

Liberal Party members in House unite behind Speaker Joe de Venecia

■ WORLD / A9

Rosa Parks makes history again: 1st woman to lie in state in US Capitol

Prices on 1st day of VAT remain stable, says DTI

By Christine Avendaño, Cynthia D. Balana and Michelle V. Remo

PRICES OF BASIC GOODS REMAINED STABLE on the first day of implementation of the 10-percent expanded value-added tax (VAT) yesterday, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

PRICES/ A7

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Greenpeace ship damages coral reef, pays up today

By Blanche S. Rivera

GREENPEACE ENVIRONMENTalists looking into the possible adverse effects of climate change on one of the Philippines' renowned coral reef for-

GREENPEACE/ A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Wednesday, November 2, 2005 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 327 P18
website: www.inq7.net

'No retraction on Babao'

Cops keep peace but no respite from politics

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr., Luige A. del Puerto, Tarra V. Quismundo and Tina G. Santos

POLICE KEPT TROUBLEMAKERS away as millions of Filipinos yesterday thronged to cemeteries to remember their dead, setting aside cares about rising taxes, soaring prices and politics.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

And in the face of police advice to keep the day solemn, the drunks stayed at home, said National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Vidal Querol.

The presence of police, including SWAT teams and soldiers in battle dress, kept the observance of All Saints' Day apparently one of the most peaceful in years.

"Their presence gave me a sense of security," returned overseas Filipino worker Alvin Marcelo told the INQUIRER while visiting his father's tomb at Tugatog Cemetery in Malabon.

* * *

But in some villages of the dead, there was no escaping politics.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who went to three cemeteries in Metro Manila to pray for dead relatives and in-laws, could not get away from it.

At the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina, where First Gentleman Mike Arroyo's father, Ignacio, is buried, the President and her family were welcomed by a small group of militants who said they

COPS KEEP/ A6

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
FP.JPM

ERIK ARAZAS

REM ZAMORA

LYN RILLON

THE NATION'S RENDEZVOUS with their beloved dead (top, at the South Cemetery) comes to an end nightfall on Tuesday but they are remembered endlessly. (Above) Here lies "Da King" visited by the queen of his heart. (At right) President Arroyo and her family pay fond respects to her father, President Diosdado Macapagal, at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Palace stands by report of Isafp

By Christine O. Avendaño, Luige A. del Puerto, Fe Zamora and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

MALACAÑANG IS standing by what President Macapagal-Arroyo disclosed last week regarding the alleged involvement of an ABS-CBN broadcaster in the bailout of a terror suspect in April.

Babao will return to work today to face an internal investigation regarding his alleged involvement in the case of terror suspect Tyrone Santos alias Dawud Santos, the network said yesterday.

In a statement faxed to the INQUIRER, the network reiterated that Babao did not post bail for Santos last April. "However, ABS-CBN wants to ensure that Babao did not violate any ethical boundaries and followed the highest standards of broadcast journalism in line with network policy," it said.

It said Babao had offered to take a leave of absence from his work until the investigation is concluded.

Speaking on Monday over dzBB radio, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye confirmed that Ms Arroyo was quoting a report by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) when she said Julius Babao had posted bail for Tyrone del Rosario Santos (aka Dawud Santos), a suspected key member of the radical Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM).

Bunye said the Isafp report was "considered an official one" unless retracted by the AFP. He said, however, that the President's remarks to INQUIRER columnist Ra-

NO RETRACTION/ A6

Enrile firm allowed to resume logging in Samar

By Blanche S. Rivera

LOGGING HAS BEEN SUSPENDed for 16 years in Samar, but the government will now allow a timber firm owned by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile to resume operations in the province.

Parts of the area opened up by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to logging operations by San Jose Timber Corp. (SJTC) fall within a forest reserve and a nature park.

The timber license agreement (TLA) of the Enrile firm covers 95,770 hectares.

The DENR not only allowed the resumption of logging in Samar but also extended the effectivity of the SJTC logging permit by another 16 years and three months, or until 2021.

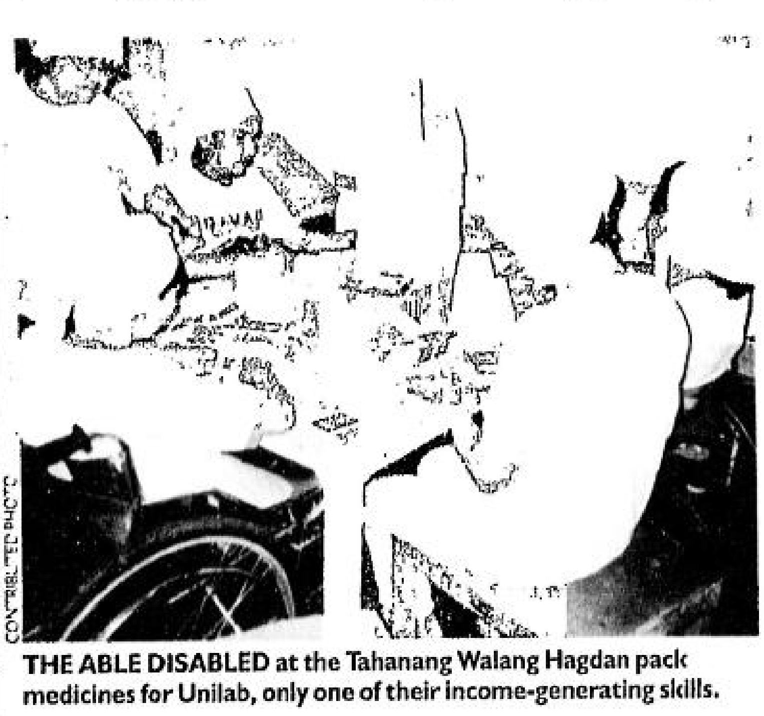
Part of the order signed by Environment Secretary Michael Defensor on Aug. 16 read: "San Jose Timber Corp. is hereby allowed to pursue its rights and activities under TLA No. 118 until June 30, 2007, with an extension of the period of said TLA equivalent to the time that lapsed from 31 May 1989 until promulgation of this order."

According to the DENR, the continued moratorium on logging in Samar was "unjustified" and should have been lifted in 1989.

It issued a moratorium on all logging activities in Samar on Feb. 8, 1989, to allow a government team to determine the extent of remaining forest resources there and the sustainable rate of

ENRILE/ A4

They find way to go up in house with no stairs



THE ABLE DISABLED at the Tahanang Walang Hagdan pack medicines for Unilab, only one of their income-generating skills.

By Blanche S. Rivera

THERE'S A WAY TO GO UP IN the house without a staircase.

For some, death in the home for the disabled would have been a welcome relief.

But then, Tahanang Walang Hagdan (TWH) is for people who may have lost their arms and legs but not their hearts, and Rene Bengzon realizes this fully well.

Having been comatose for three months and completely paralyzed for two years, Bengzon knew what it felt like to be as good as dead.

The 35-year-old Bengzon had come from the mission house of Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity in Tayuman, Manila, a refuge for the abandoned.

"I know they call it 'house of the dying'," Bengzon says in Tagalog, his speech faltering but his tone proud. "That was where I came from ... but I never gave up on life, and here I am in this house."

Bengzon is among more than 300 people being treated and trained at the TWH, an institution that has cared for handicapped men, women and children for the past 33 years.

He is one of some 60 TWH skilled workers lured by United Laboratories as a packer of medicines. Unilab is one of two firms providing employment for the disabled in the TWH compound in Cainta, Rizal.

While packing is a cinch now for this once immobile guy—he

THEY FIND/ A4

Number of faith healers doubles due to 'hard times'

By Jerry E. Esplanada

(Last of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

THE NUMBER OF FAITH HEALers in the Southern Tagalog province of Batangas has increased in the past few years, according to officials of a group affiliated with the Philippine Medical Association.

"Same with the number of people consulting local healers," said Batangas healer Danilo Borbon. In his "practice," they have "more than doubled during the past couple of years."

"Maybe because of the hard times," Borbon said. "Today, most of the local folk who consult us are really poor." Others say they had already consulted doctors who apparently failed to heal them.

Ka Danny, Tuklaw, Ka Neneng and Ka Odette are household names in many parts of Batangas.

They do not have any formal training in medicine, but miraculous recoveries from various ailments, including illnesses reportedly caused by elementals or nature spirits, have been attributed to them and their "special healing skills."

They are *herbolario* (*manggagamot* in the Batangas tongue) or faith healers, local doctors who use a myriad of techniques, including divine intervention and prayers where they invoke the intercession of deities, to cure illness.

Like a majority of medical practitioners, Batangas Medical Society

NUMBER/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience mostly cloudy skies, with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent rains over Eastern Luzon and Mindanao.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/11/02/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2005

LP reunites, backs Joe de V

THE DIVIDED LIBERAL PARTY CONTINGENT IN the House of Representatives has decided reunite and to stick with Speaker Jose de Venecia, ending speculations the party would bolt the ruling coalition in the latest power struggle to rock the 236-member chamber.

Rep. Junie Cua, the LP vice president for external affairs, said LP members had agreed to reunify the party that was divided by the failed impeachment bid against President Macapagal-Arroyo "in the interest of strengthening party unity."

Cua, who chairs the House trade committee, said the decision was reached at a post-impeachment reconciliation caucus in which the entire LP contingent also decided to support the Speaker who is facing a challenge from Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay.

"To demonstrate our firm decision to unite, the entire LP contingent decided to reaffirm our support for Speaker De Venecia's strong leadership—guided by our vision to bring good governance and stability to the country," said Cua, the representative for the lone district of Quirino province.

Cua said that during the unification meeting the party made it clear to the 34 LP members in the House that they "can agree to disagree without being disagreeable."

Earlier, Quezon province Rep. Lorenzo "Erin" Tañada III told the INQUIRER that both De Venecia and Pichay had sent emissaries seeking the LP's support.

Although Pichay has yet to formally announce his bid for the speakership, several administration and opposition legislators confirmed that he was indeed gunning for the top post.

De Venecia has denied that there was rebellion in the ranks, saying it was more of a "post-impeachment jockeying" for committee chairmanships.

He expects the reorganization to be finished before Congress resumes session on Monday but couldn't say which House committees would continue to be chaired by the Liberals.

Another LP leader, Rep. Antonino Roman of Bataan, said the party's decision "brings together the anti and pro-impeachment factions" in the party that had clashed during the impeachment proceedings against the President in the House.

Half of the party voted to impeach Ms Arroyo following the decision of LP officials led by Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan to break ties with the President over allegations that she cheated to win in 2004.

The rest of the LP membership chose to follow the ruling coalition's decision to support Ms Arroyo.

The LP is the third biggest party in the House after the Nationalist People's Coalition and the Lakas CMD, all of which have declared that the majority coalition supporting De Venecia was still intact.

Cua said the decision to reconcile was based on a mutual respect for each other's principles.

"The pro-impeachment members are not surrendering their principles and the anti-impeachment members are fully aware of this as the basis for our reunification," he said. *Michael Lim Ubac*

Lapid, Revilla brokering dialogue for GMA, Senate

By TJ Burgonio and Juliet Labog-Javellana

ADMINISTRATION SENATORS LITO Lapid and Ramon Revilla Jr. are brokering talks, reportedly with Palace backing, between President Macapagal-Arroyo and members of the Senate to restore warm relations that were strained by the Senate inquiries into alleged executive wrongdoing.

Lapid and Revilla, who are close allies of Ms Arroyo, have been quietly approaching colleagues in the administration bloc to get their consensus on a possible social gathering with the President this month.

A senator, who asked not to be named, confirmed that the two have been commissioned by Malacañang to lay the ground for a dialogue.

Lapid's chief media relations officer, Alex Marcelino, said, however, that the senator initiated the moves on his own in the hopes of "bridging the gap" between the President and the senators.

Reconciliation talks had been in the air since Sept. 28 when the President issued Executive Order 464, barring executive, police and military officials from appearing before congressional hearings without her consent.

Malacañang has been making overtures for a dialogue, sending its own emissaries and congressional allies to talk to the senators.

Before the Senate adjourned last week, Lapid and Revilla talked with Senators Richard Gordon and Manuel Roxas and other members of their Monday Group, as well as other Senate colleagues about the Palace get-together.

Some senators welcomed the idea, but set certain conditions.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said he agreed with the proposal on the condition that the President meet with the entire Senate or at least with members of political parties, not individual senators.

"I have nothing against it except that it should not be done individually. I propose that this be done with the whole Senate. But if this is not possible, then maybe this should be done along party lines," he said in an interview.

He said Ms Arroyo could meet with him and other members of the Liberal Party like Senate President Franklin Drilon, Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and Roxas, Biazon said.

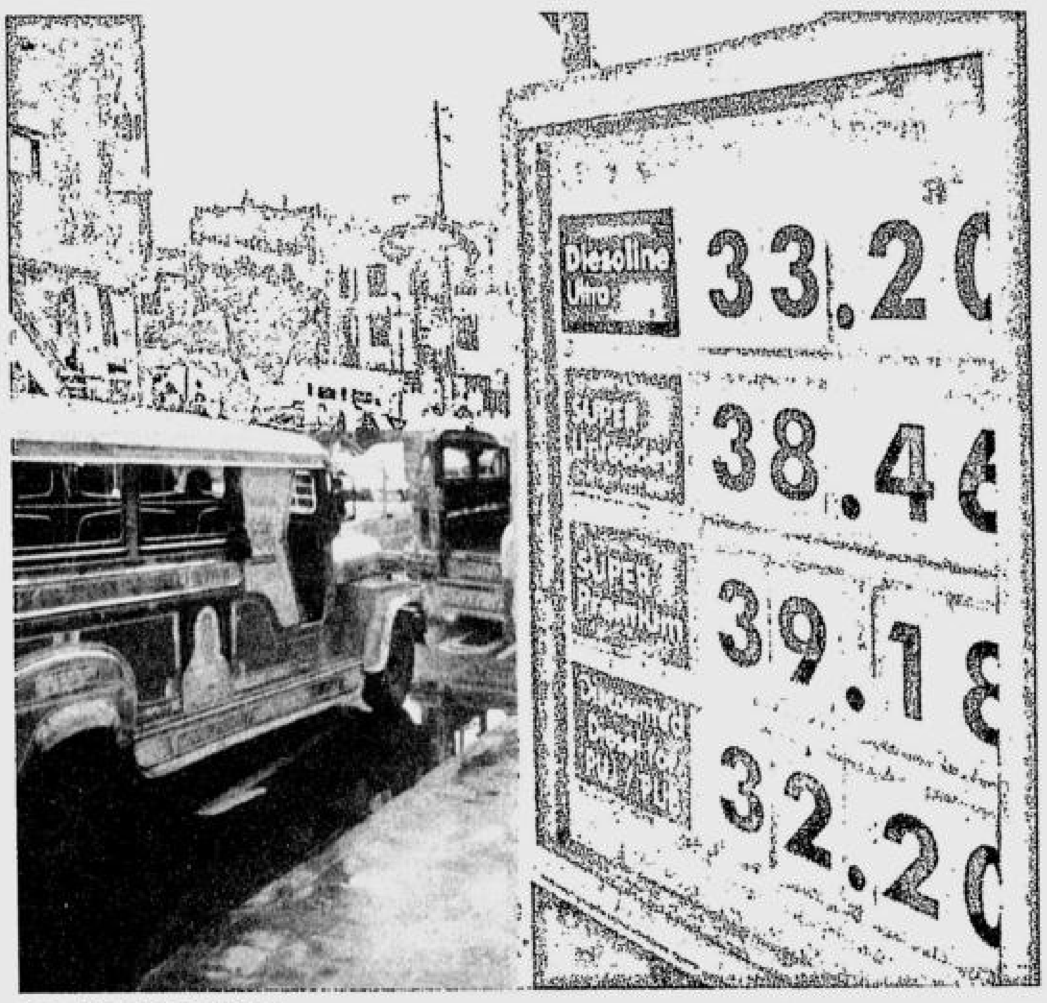
Biazon, Drilon and Pangilinan broke ties with the President and joined former President Aquino, 10 resigned Cabinet officials and a Makati business group in calling for Ms Arroyo's resignation on July 8.

Gordon said he welcomed the proposal but stressed that it should not just be about politics but an agenda "about the things we can agree on so we can move the country forward."

He cited, among other issues, the 2006 national budget, the expanded value-added tax, graft and corruption and education

"Beyond politics, we should talk about the things that are economically and infrastructurally good for our people," Gordon said.

Reacting to earlier reports that the camp of Sen. Sen. Manuel Villar expected him to yield the Senate presidency in January, Drilon yesterday reiterated he would give up the post only in July, citing the term-sharing agreement forged at the opening of the 13th Congress in 2004.



UP, UP AND AWAY... REM ZAMORA

A passenger jeepney passes a sign of the new prices of gasoline at a service station in Makati City. Oil prices went up yesterday on the first day of the implementation of the expanded value added tax law, which now covers fuel prices and power rates. The new VAT cancelled out the the price cuts imposed by some oil firms resulting from the decline in the price of crude oil in the world market. ***(Story on Page 1)***

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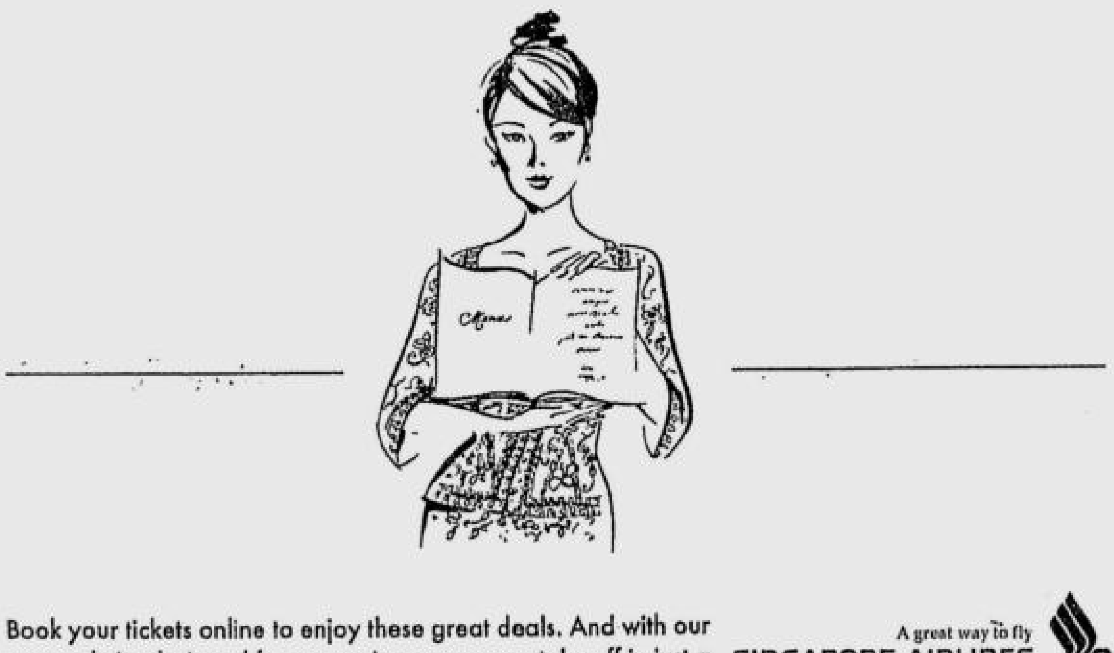

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5543, Series of 2005.

4 NGOs on fertilizer aid list not registered

By TJ Burgonio

FOUR OF EIGHT NONGOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs) listed as beneficiaries of the controversial P728-million fertilizer fund of the Department of Agriculture (DA) were not registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Cooperative Development Authority.

The Senate committee on agriculture and food identified the NGOs as the Gabay Masa Development Foundation Inc., People's Organization for Progress and Development Foundation Inc., Magsasaka Foundation Inc. and Matatag na Republika.

"We checked with the SEC and the Cooperative Development Authority, and based on the documents that we received, these were unregistered," a staff of the committee, who declined to be named, said in an interview. "So these are just being used whether by national or local officials or the DA to make money."

After the Department of Budget Management (DBM) released the fund under a special allotment release order (SARO) in February 2004, the DA identified the eight NGOs as among the beneficiaries, according to the staff.

Of the P728-million fund, the DA released some P152.5 million to the NGOs, according to audit officials.

The other beneficiaries, which like the NGOs were supposed to serve as conduits for the eventual transfer of the fund to farmers, were suppliers of farm implements and local government units (LGUs). They have yet to be identified.

The committee, chaired by Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., opened an inquiry into the alleged mismanagement of the fund, which falls under the DA's Ginintuang Masaganang Ani program, in the run-up to the May 2004 presidential elections.

The fund, solely meant to buy farm inputs for farmers nationwide, was believed to have been diverted to boost the presidential campaign of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The registered NGOs were the Aaron Foundation, incorporated in February 1999; Ikaw at Ako Foundation, May 2002; National Organization for Agricultural Enhancement and Productivity Inc., June 2002; and Philippine Social Development Foundation, 1990, according to the committee.

Of these, only the National Organization for Agricultural Enhancement and Productivity Inc. has indicated in its certificate of incorporation that it was agriculture-oriented.

The rest were established to promote the well-being of Filipinos, advocate livelihood projects in rural and depressed areas, and provide assistance to marginalized Filipinos.

In the past two hearings, the Commission on Audit (COA) disclosed that of the P728 million, the DA released only P723 million to its regional field units (RFUs) and retained the balance.

Of the P723 million, the RFUs released only P615 million to the beneficiaries-conduits, such as the suppliers, LGUs and NGOs, and kept the balance of P108 million supposedly for "administrative expenses."

Of the total amount released, P91.1 million went to suppliers; P371 million to LGUs, and P152.5 million to NGOs. Of the amount released to the NGOs, only 51 percent had so far been liquidated, according to COA officials.

Meanwhile, lawyer Angelo Buenviaje, Magsaysay's chief of staff, said he has gathered the necessary documents from the DBM office before it was hit by fire last Friday.

"More or less we have the documents that we need," he said, referring to the documents on fund releases such as the SARO, advice of notice of cash allocation and notice of cash allocation (NCA). "We can make a report based on these documents."

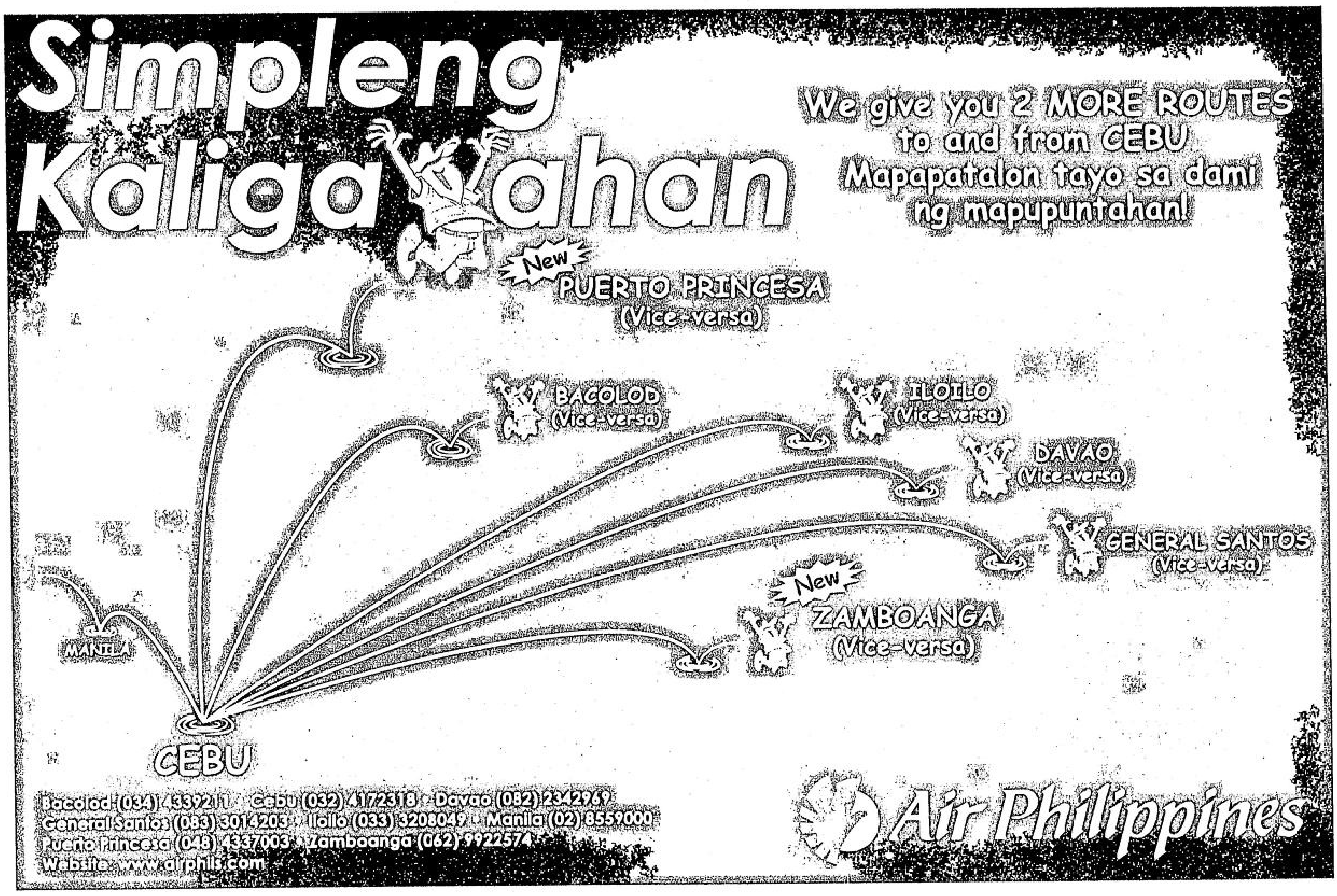
The documents covered releases of funds from 2002 up to this year, according to Buenviaje.

A fire hit the DBM office two days after the committee conducted its second hearing and former Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin gave her deposition while confined at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute.

Boncodin said the DBM released the fund in one day to then Agriculture Secretary Luis "Cito" Lorenzo, three months before the elections.

The committee plans to hold its third and final hearing in mid-November, hoping that by that time the Supreme Court has ruled on the constitutionality of Executive Order 464, Buenviaje said.

The EO, issued on Sept. 28, bars administration, police and military officials from appearing before congressional hearings without the President's consent. Cabinet secretaries have snubbed the hearings since then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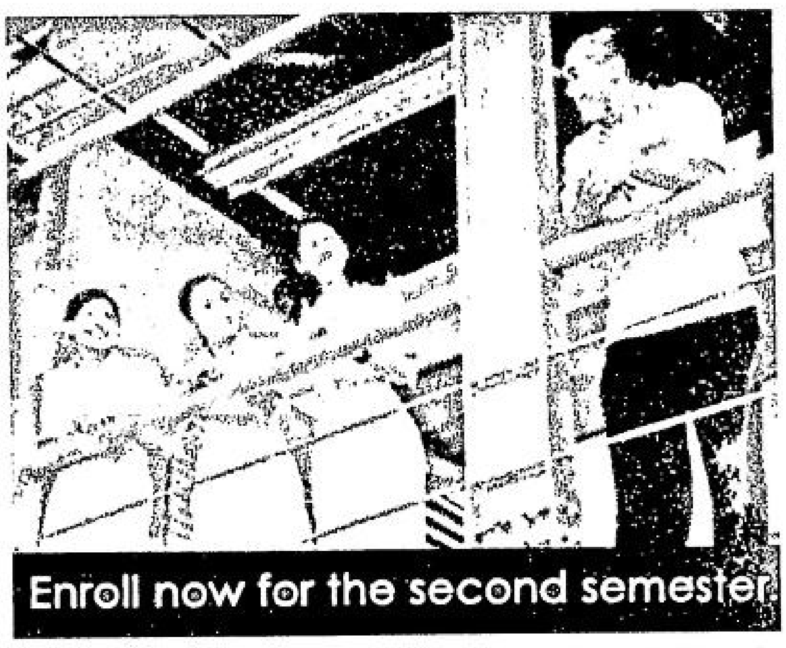

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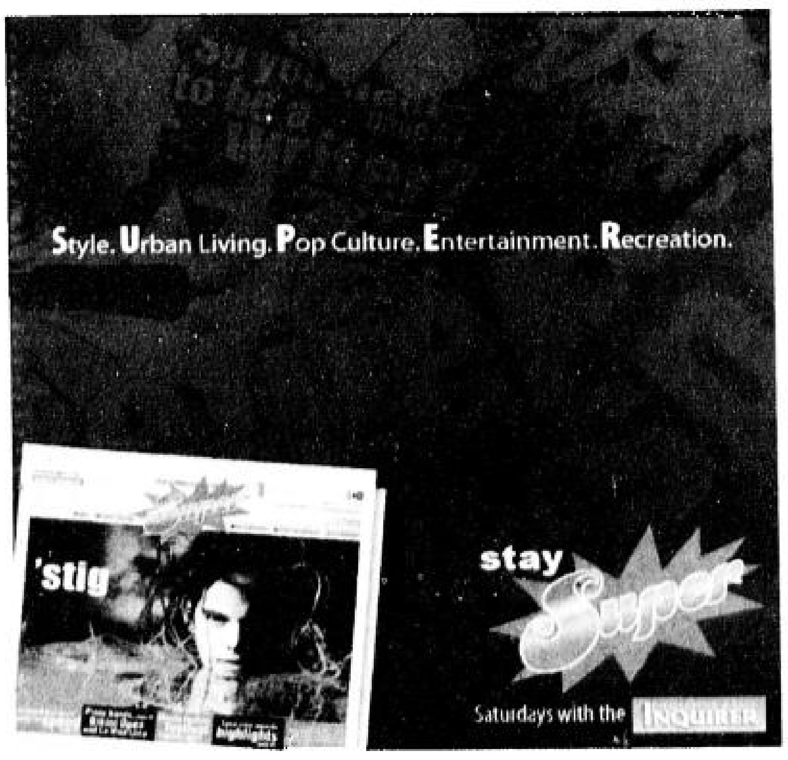
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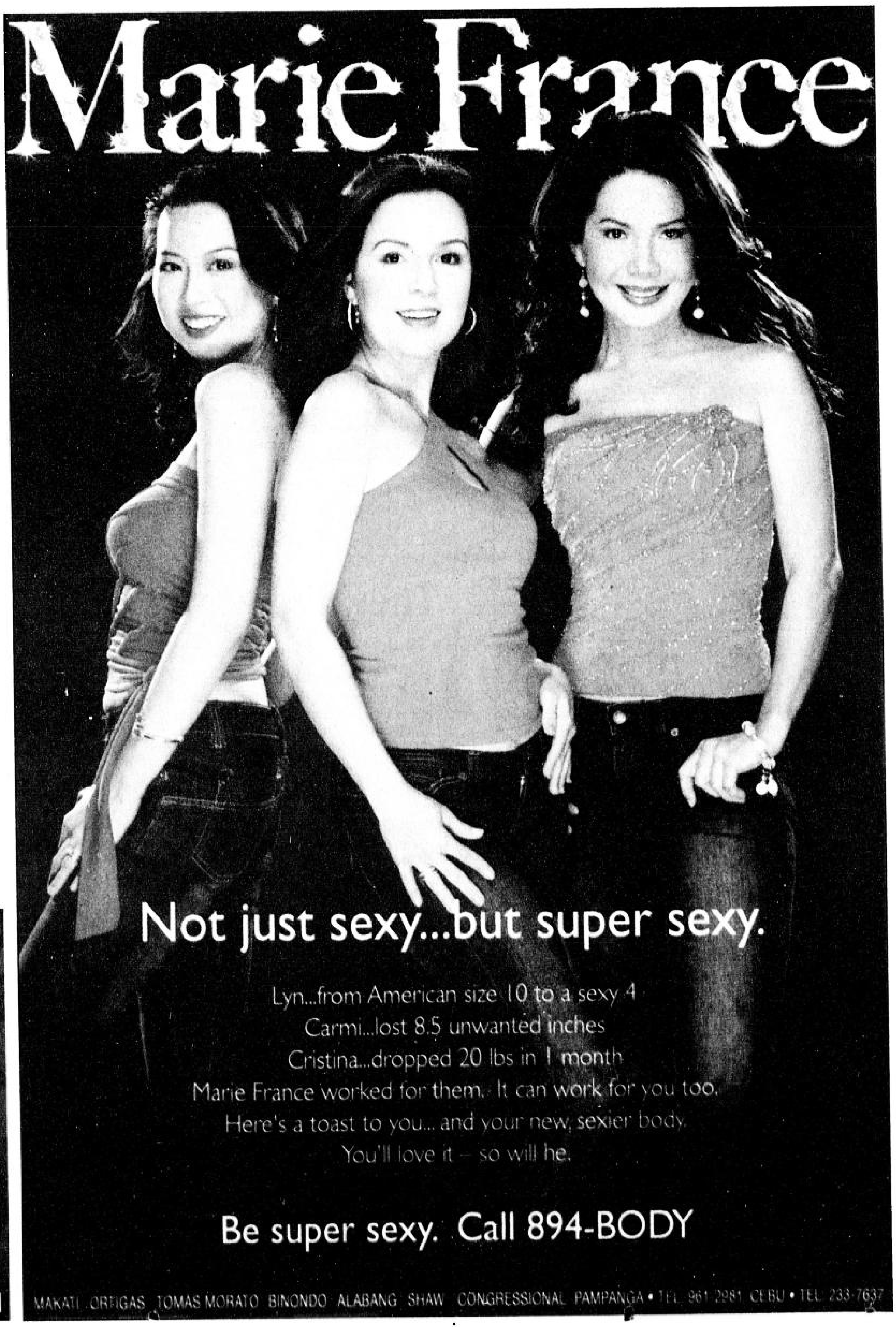
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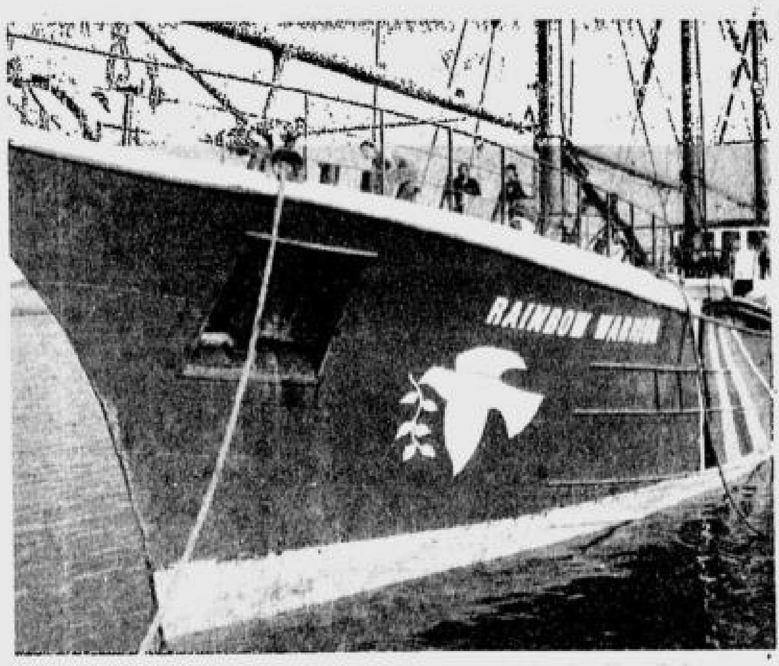
Greenpeace ship damages coral reef, pays up today

From page A1

SAVE OUR REEFS!

TUBBATAHA REEF NATIONAL MARINE Park, one of the most diverse habitats in the marine tropics, is a Unesco World Heritage Site. AFP



THE FLAGSHIP of Greenpeace, the Rainbow Warrior II, sails into Puerto Princesa, Palawan, and ironically runs afoul of its own environmental concerns. AFP

mations have ended up accidentally doing some damage themselves.

The accident happened Monday when the international group's flagship, the Rainbow Warrior II, ran aground at the Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park, a World Heritage site of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) off Palawan in the Sulu Sea.

The 55-meter schooner's bow sliced through a reef formation, damaging an area totaling 32 meters by 3 meters of the 100-million square-meter reef, said a joint statement issued by Greenpeace and the Tubbataha Management Office (TMO).

TMO assessed the damage at P384,000 ($6,857).

"The good thing with Greenpeace is that they know the value of these coral reefs and they were prepared to pay for the damage," TMO manager Angelique Songco told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

Greenpeace was the first group of environment advocates to cause damage to the reef, but private expeditions had been fined for similar incidents before, Songco said.

Inaccurate chart

The maritime chart held by Greenpeace mariners indicated that the Rainbow Warrior was still 2.4 km away from the reef when the ship's hull hit the reef's wall.

The chart was the latest issued by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority but was apparently not accurate, Greenpeace said.

"We were all really aghast at the accident. It was a really bad thing that happened," Red Constantino, Greenpeace-Southeast Asia energy campaigner, said in a phone interview.

"This accident could have been avoided if the chart was accurate. We feel responsible, however," he said. "This incident is very regrettable." He said the damage would be paid for today.

Both Greenpeace and TMO called attention to the "serious need" for updated maps and precise maritime charts to avoid similar accidents.

"We appreciate the work that Greenpeace continues to do for the environment. We also appreciate the immediate action they took to get the full assessment of the damage," Songco said.

No excuse

However, she said the inaccurate map used by Greenpeace could not be used as an excuse.

"You're navigating, you take all the precautions," she said.

The grounding did not cause any major damage to the Rainbow Warrior or serious delays to the ship's expedition. The ship's own rubber boats safely towed the vessel into deeper water, and it escaped serious damage, an AFP photographer aboard the ship said.

Some 15 divers from Greenpeace and the media proceeded with their mission 30 minutes after the grounding.

The good news from Greenpeace is that climate change has not caused the bleaching of Tubbataha's corals.

"Thankfully there was no coral bleaching. It (reef) was all beautiful and healthy. This should show people what we stand to lose if we don't do anything about global warming," Constantino said.

Campaign for clean energy

The Rainbow Warrior II arrived at the reservation in the middle of the Sulu Sea, about 600 km south of Manila, last weekend as part of a four-month Asia-Pacific campaign to promote a massive shift to clean, renewable energy.

The expedition to the reef is part of Greenpeace's efforts to document what is at stake should global warming worsen. Environmentalists say that gases emitted in the burning of fossil fuels for energy have led to a rise in ocean temperatures which is destroying coral reefs.

Originally built in Britain in 1957 as a steam-powered fishing vessel, the Rainbow Warrior II replaced its namesake that was sunk by French agents in 1985 in Auckland harbor on its way to Moruroa Atoll to block a French nuclear test.

One crew member drowned and two French secret service agents were later jailed after pleading guilty to charges of manslaughter and willful damage. *With reports from AFP and AP*

Ang masarap na kwento ni

Mama Sita

ANG SARAP SIGURONG MAGING NANAY SI MAMA SITA. ANG DAMI MONG MATUTUTUNAN, HINDI LANG SA MGA ULAM...
ANG MASARAP NA BANGUS, 'YUNG MALIIT ANG ULO AT MAIKSI ANG BUNTOT.
KUNDI PATI SA NEGOSYO...
SA PAGGAWA NG TURON, ANG BIBILHIN MONG SAGING, 'YUNG HINOG NA HINOG NA. MAS MASARAP NA ANG TURON, MAS MAKAKATIPID PA.
OO SIGE, AKIN NA ANG TATLONG BUWIG. 'YUNG SUPER HINOG, HA, PANGTURON.
ANG DAMI MONG MAGIGING KAIBIGAN, LALO NA SA PALENGKE...
O... AYAN NA SI MAMA SITA, SIGURADONG MAUUBOS ANG PANINDA NATIN...
MAMA SITA, PAKYAWIN MO NA ITONG MGA SAGING NA SABA KO!
ANG DAMI MONG BIGLAANG MARARATING...
SAAN PO TAYO, MA'M?
PUNTA TAYONG TAGAYTAY. BIBILI LANG AKO NG PINYA.
AT HIGIT SA LAHAT, ANG DAMI MONG MATITIKMANG MASASARAP NA PAGKAIN...
TIKMAN MO NGA ITONG INIHAW KONG BARBECUE, APO...
ANG SARAP!!
KAYA TALAGANG MASARAP MAGING MOMMY SI MAMA SITA.
MABUTI NA LANG, MAY MGA MAMA SITA'S MIXES AND SAUCES NA, PARA LAHAT TAYO SA BUONG PILIPINAS, MAKAKATIKIM KUNG PAANO MAGMAHAL...
MAGLAMBING...
MAGSAYA KAPILING ANG ATING MAMA SITA.

Pamanang Sarap sa Bawat Pamilya

PHILIPPINES
Mama Sita's
Teresita Mama Sita Reyes

Enrile firm allowed to resume logging in Samar

From page A1

forest extraction.

Samar, the third largest island in the country, is listed as one of the Philippines' 18 centers of plant diversity and nine endemic bird areas.

Factoran's watch

The moratorium on logging, signed by then Environment Secretary Fulgencio Factoran Jr., should have lapsed on May 30, 1989, as prescribed. But neither Factoran nor his successors at the DENR lifted the suspension.

"The study having been completed, there thus existed no more reason or justification ... to extend the effects of the moratorium beyond its expiration on 30 May 1989," the nine-page order read.

"This Office notes that there is no question on the TLA's validity and existence. The issue posed here is the legality of its prolonged suspension due to facts and circumstances arising after the MO had lapsed."

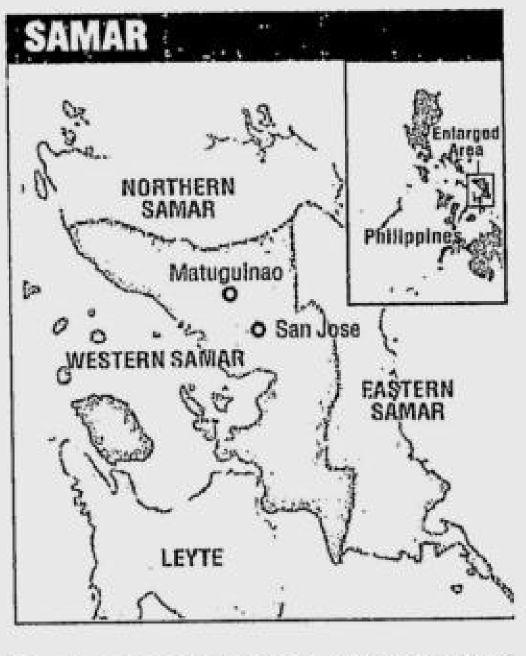
These "circumstances" include the establishment of the Samar Island Forest Reserve in 1996 and the Samar Island Nature Park in 2003, which effectively prohibits timber harvesting in the protected areas covering more than 300,000 hectares.

'Prior rights'

Environment Undersecretary Armando de Castro said there was no issue with the DENR's approval of logging on Samar Island because even the proclamations creating the forest reserve and nature park recognized "prior rights" over the lands.

De Castro, who oversees the government's protected areas programs, said Enrile's firm had a right to harvest timber because a huge part of the area covered by the timber licensing agreement were plantations that belonged to SJTC.

"The company has lost revenues because of the continued moratorium, and it has a valid TLA. Now, unless the government can indemnify the SJTC if this is taken to court, it cannot cancel the TLA," De Castro said in an interview.



The DENR, which imposed a log ban in 15 of the country's 16 regions, has reviewed and cancelled numerous TLAs.

But it did not cancel the TLA of the Enrile firm because there was no basis to do so, De Castro said, adding that the SJTC's failure to fulfill its obligations was caused by the moratorium on logging.

He said the only issue to be resolved by the DENR and SJTC was the part of the 300,000-hectare Samar Island Nature Park that would be covered by the resumed logging operations.

The geographic survey necessary to determine this may be shouldered by either the government or the SJTC, he said.

At least thrice

The Enrile firm had asked the DENR at least three times to lift the moratorium. But its requests were denied because the area covered by its TLA had become part of protected areas.

"This Office finds that there was, at the very least, a crystal-clear error in the concerned public official's reading of the pertinent provisions of the MO and the relevant proclamations," the DENR order read.

"The unjustified continuation of the suspension ... attributable to the errors committed by past public officials despite the repeated demands of the requesting party ... leads this Office to raise the hand of equity to at least ameliorate the injustice brought about by attendant circumstances," it read.

They find way to go up in house with no stairs

From page A1

can do hundreds of medicines in one day—Bengzon vividly remembers the time he had to rely on unwilling relatives to bathe and feed him, and practically just keep him alive.

After undergoing an operation for appendicitis at the Philippine General Hospital when he was 17 years old, Bengzon was left comatose for three months.

Given up for dead

Giving up on him, friends brought him to his mother's house in Samar to die. One day, he woke up. The reality he opened his eyes to was as bitter as death.

He could not move his arms and legs or any parts of his small body, but his eyes did not miss the begrudging looks thrown by his stepmother every time she bathed him. His ears caught all the painful words and the edge in his caretakers' voices.

"They said it was better to care for a pig because it could be sold. They said I had no use for them," Bengzon recalls, fighting tears.

That was hard to swallow, he says. It challenged him and motivated every part of his frail body to the point of gradual mobility.

"I did not know what happened but I tried to learn how to move. After almost two years, I was able to stand with crutches," he says.

With the help of a friend, Bengzon took the first ship to Manila but again found only strangers in a relative's house in Sampaloc where he had stayed before as a factory worker.

Cure for loneliness

Alone and homeless, he went to a church in Manila. There, the parish priest took pity on him and brought him to the Sisters of Charity mission house. This was where TWH founder Sr. Valeriana Baerts found him.

The TWH has a special building for the abandoned. It tries to keep their minds off loneliness through sports, church activities, skills training and therapy sessions.

"A lot of people here have either tried to commit suicide or have simply given up on life, choosing to sit at home all by themselves, not talking, not moving, just... waiting to die," TWH general manager Joy C. Garcia says.

Garcia, who was stricken with polio since she was a child, says adults whose disabilities were caused by accidents have a more difficult time accepting their condition and moving toward a normal life.

"The frustration of the newly disabled is so great that many of them had tried to end their lives before their families brought them here," Garcia says.

There are 20 handicapped children in the TWH. Like Garcia, they are given a new lease on life, being schooled inside the compound. Next to their classroom are skills development classes for the adults.

Crafts, skills

The adults are taught carpentry, metal work, candle, candy and soap-making, needlework, cards packaging and other arts and crafts.

Garcia says the institution has shifted from doing novelty items for corporate giveaways and souvenirs to making furniture. The TWH recently won the bidding to provide 500 chairs for public schools in Rizal.

It has also partnered with 14 towns in Rizal to provide rehabilitation programs for the disabled.

They cannot be left alone

Bengzon still walks with a limp and a slight swagger, causing people to mistake him for a drunk. Hecklers shouting jokes and curses along his path are common but nothing could dampen his second chance at life.

Eleven years ago, he found a wife, who teaches at the TWH daycare, and they now have a son in pre-school.

"The world falls flat when you have an accident, but then you have to live again, that's just how it is. You have to pick up the broken pieces and get over the misery. That's where we help them. We try to give them hope and reintroduce them to as normal a life as possible," Baerst says.

Citing studies, Baerst says 13 percent of the population is disabled, including one percent confined to a wheelchair.

"No country can afford to leave them alone... It is an uphill battle, but the important thing is to give them a chance to learn, to be integrated into the society," Baerst says.

Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, a front-page story—"Celebrities recall close encounters with nature spirits"—misstated that Barangay Bilibiran is situated near Binangonan, Rizal. Bilibiran is actually part of the town of Binangonan.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Heart attack candidates getting younger, says doc

By Christian V. Esguerra

FILIPINO CANDIDATES FOR OPEN-HEART surgery are getting younger due to their apparent disregard of the major risk factors that could lead to cardiovascular ailments, a heart expert has warned.

Over the past decade, patients undergoing coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery have gone from being in their late 40s to their early 30s, according to Dr. Ramon Ribu, one of only 81 thoracic, cardiac and vascular surgeons in the Philippines.

"They're getting younger and younger," Ribu told the INQUIRER in an interview.

A major but common heart operation, CABG addresses the problem of narrowed or blocked arteries by creating new routes to allow sufficient blood flow to deliver oxygen and other nutrients to the heart muscles.

Rubi said the main culprits for this serious condition are smoking, obesity, a bad diet and an overall unhealthy lifestyle.

There have been isolated cases, however, where patients had blocked arteries despite the absence of any of the risk factors. Like the 28-year-old on whom Rubi performed a three-vessel bypass two years ago, he said.

Exclusive for the rich

In the past, Rubi said it was generally thought that heart ailments were an exclusive problem of the rich. This was supposedly because only they could afford the "good food" – the rich, fatty and salty kind, he said.

But with the advent of "fast food," Rubi said the problem has come to stalk the poor as well. "With fast food, the barrier is [broken]," he said.

He said this led to another common misconception – that heart operations, while generally expensive, could never be availed of by the poor.

A CABG costs around P500,000 while the relatively new endovascular surgery costs between P800,000 and P1 million, Rubi said.

He said that between 2001 and 2004, at least 1,146 patients, mostly indigent, were operated on at the Philippine Heart Center, the country's main heart hospital, through its social services program.

"Heart surgery is for both the rich and the poor so nobody should take for granted any sign of a heart problem," he said.

Another misconception is that complicated heart operations cannot be performed in the country, given the steady exodus of its doctors and nurses for abroad. This has forced those who could afford it to seek treatment in hospitals overseas, Rubi said.

CFC ban starts next year – DENR

OZONE-DEPLETING REFRIGERANTS ARE to be banned in the Philippines from next year, in a move that would affect motorists with vehicles that are at least six years old, the environment and natural resources department said yesterday.

The phaseout would also affect manufacturers of foam mattresses, inhalers for asthma patients, and others that rely on chlorofluorocarbon (CFC), Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Michael Defensor said in a statement.

He urged owners of older cars that use the CFC-12 or R-12 type of refrigerants in their air conditioning systems to shift to the CFC-free R-134a used in newer vehicles.

The 1987 Montreal Protocol commits the Philippines to outlawing the production and consumption of compounds that deplete ozone in the stratosphere.

Ozone, a molecule of oxygen, is a stratospheric shield for life on Earth, filtering out dangerous ultraviolet rays from the Sun that damage vegetation and can cause skin cancer and cataracts.

The protective layer has been increasingly damaged by man-made chemicals, especially bromine, chlorine and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

CFCs are an aerosol gas, previously used in refrigerators, whose use was belatedly controlled by the Montreal Protocol. *AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, November 2, 2005
All Souls Day

1st Reading: Is 25:6-9
2nd Reading: 1 Cor 15:20-24,25-28
Gospel: Matthew 11:25-30

On that occasion Jesus said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I praise you, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to simple people. Yes, Father, this is what pleased you.

"Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who work hard and who carry heavy burdens and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart; and you will find rest. For my yoke is good and my burden is light."

Commentary

There will be a day when there are no more tears or suffering and death will be no more. A feast will be prepared for all people and our God will be so close as to wipe our tears away. But we must be among those who waited for the Lord to save us and rejoiced in his Word, then we will rest with the hand of Yahweh upon us. Jesus calls us not to the feasts of this world, but the wedding feast of the Lamb, the banquet of heaven where life is shared with all. All are invited here but so many of us make excuses: family, business, greed, another sale, expansion of profit and so those crippled, make lame, the blind and the poor will be brought in before us and many invited will not truly eat of the feast of God. Jesus, we pray for those who have gone before us—may they know the feast and one day, may we too sit at table with you and those we have long loved, and all the friends of God in your kingdom. Amen.

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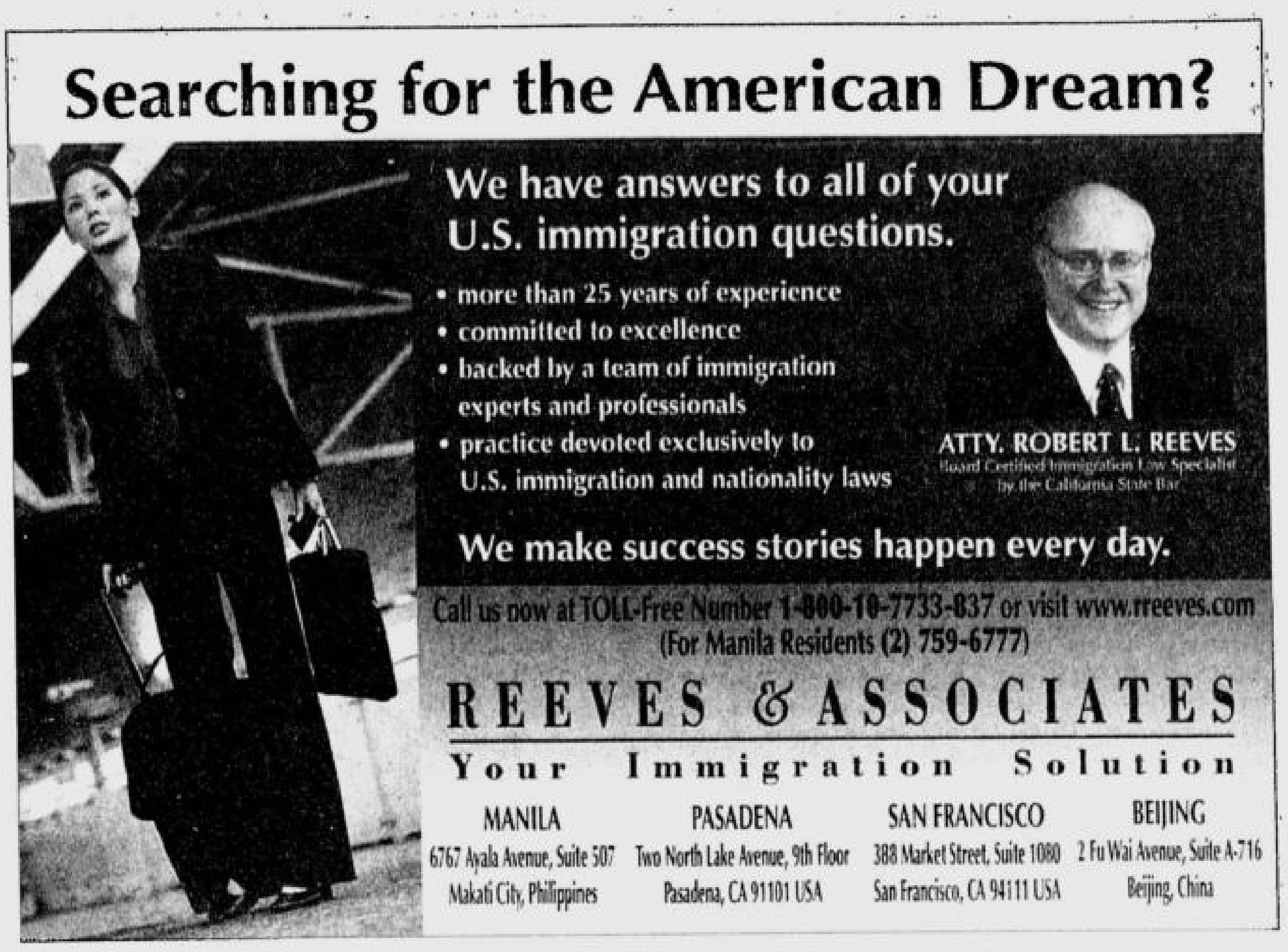

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Celebrating his 50th Wedding Anniversary was just icing on the cake.

Dahil sa alaga ni Doktor at sa mga gamot na binuhusan ng research, he can live longer and more fruitfully, despite his heart disease.

For Lolo Andy, discovering he had heart disease when he was 60 made him fearful for his and his wife's future. The uncertainty darkened their blissful life. Pero salamat sa Maykapal, sa alaga ni Doktor at ng mga gamot na binuhusan ng research, Lolo Andy today lives happily and fruitfully despite his heart disease. Sulit talaga ang gamot n'ya — gamot na gawa ng Pfizer! Pfizer not only saved his heart, it also helped him and his wife reach 50 years of a love-filled life together. Definitely a milestone worth living for! Sabi nga ni Lolo Andy, dahil mahalaga ang buhay, ang gamot dapat sulit.

Dapat Sulit.

Pfizer

No retraction on Babao, says Palace

From page A1

mon Tulfo were "off the record."

"We don't know why this report saw print," Bunye said.

Jonathan Tiongco, the audio expert said to have helped bail out Santos, confirmed his involvement yesterday.

But Tiongco said his role in the posting of the bail was "limited [to] a professional level."

Tiongco also said neither he nor ABS-CBN's Babao had provided the cash for the bail. "There was no need. The family and some supporters were able to raise some money," he told the Inquirer by phone.

When that money ran out, a bondsman agreed to help Santos get out of jail, Tiongco added.

But according to a ranking intelligence official, only Babao could have raised the P200,000 needed for Santos' bail.

Circumstantial evidence

"We have circumstantial evidence to [show] that Babao paid it," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Citing the Isafp report, the President last week told Tulfo that Babao had posted bail for Santos, the supposed second in command of the RSM, which is allegedly allied with the regional terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah.

Ms Arroyo described the Isafp report to Tulfo as "very disturbing."

Both Babao and ABS-CBN have denied he posted bail for Santos, the younger brother of captured RSM leader Hilarion del Rosario Santos (aka Ahmad Santos).

ABS-CBN had said the lack of an antiterror law, and not intervention by the media, had caused Santos' release.

Babao had said the bail was arranged by Tiongco, whom Environment Secretary Michael Defensor had presented to the public in August in an effort to prove that the "Hello Garci" tapes alleging fraud in the 2004 presidential election were fake.

Bunye said Malacañang was one with ABS-CBN in its statement that the Philippines needed an antiterror law at this time.

In a matter of minutes

Per the account of the intelligence official, Santos' lawyer Nicomedes Martelino, agreed to post the bail of P200,000 after speaking with Babao during a brief recess in a court hearing on April 18 or 19.

Only minutes earlier, Martelino had asked the court to reduce the bail on grounds that Santos was not "gainfully employed," the official said, citing a report filed by military lawyers and agents who were at the hearing.

One agent told the Inquirer that he saw Martelino, Babao and Santos talking during the recess. When the hearing resumed, Martelino "made a manifestation that his client was ready with the cash bond."

"We were surprised. How could Santos raise that money in a matter of minutes? We became apprehensive," the agent, who asked not to be named, said in a phone interview.

"We have no proof that the money came from him (Babao), but the stenographer's notes at the court hearing will show how fast Martelino changed his position," the agent said.

The agent also said Tiongco was at the hearing as "a liaison between Santos and his family."

Tiongco introduced himself as Martelino's "legal researcher," the agent said.

Illegal possession

The bail was for the case of illegal possession of explosives, firearms and ammunition filed against Santos in the Tarlac court. But the hearing for the grant of bail was held at Branch 96 of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court headed by Judge Afable Cajigal.

A separate case for illegal possession of firearms was also filed against Santos in the Pangasinan RTC, for which the recommended bail of P80,000 was reduced to P40,000 during a hearing at a Manila court in the same week. Lawyer Homobono Adaza represented Santos in that hearing.

With the grant of bail in the two cases, the two courts ordered the Isafp to release Santos.

He was freed on April 26.

Santos was arrested on March 22 in his apartment in Cubao, Quezon City, by military intelligence operatives. He was linked to an alleged plot to bomb Metro Manila during the Holy Week.

Research

Tiongco, who said his work occasionally involved paralegal services and data collection or verification, claimed to have been hired to do research on the Santos case.

He refused to say who had hired him.

He said in an e-mail that Babao—who was supposedly introduced to him earlier—was also covering the Santos story at the time. He said the broadcaster had asked him to help Santos.

Based on what he saw, the relationship between Santos and Babao "appeared to be on a personal level," Tiongco claimed, adding:

"It was Babao who knew them (the Santos family), not me."

Tiongco said he contacted a lawyer who, in turn, prepared the pleadings and bail documents.

He said that to a certain extent, it was true what Babao had said—that he (Tiongco) had helped arrange the bail. But this was only because the broadcaster had requested him to do so, he said.

He also said that despite being jobless, "Dawud was able to produce money for legal services."

In Babao's earlier account, he had said: "Tiongco offered to help because he said Santos was framed. I merely connected them, that's all."

Media 'personality'

Although he did not name Babao, Rear Adm. Tirso Danga, AFP deputy chief of staff for intelligence (J-2), was categorical about the supposed involvement of "a personality from the media" in Santos' bail.

Danga made the allegation in a news conference on Wednesday last week, where the military presented Ahmad Santos to the President and the media.

Asked by a reporter if he thought Dawud Santos could take the place of the captured RSM leader, Danga said: "The brother (Dawud) is a member of the RSM, but he is out on bail and it was even a personality from the media who gave the bail to help this person out."

'Nowhere to be seen'

Danga then made a pitch for the need for an antiterror law in order to keep suspected terrorists in detention longer.

"You will notice that we have been fighting an enemy that uses the very democracy that they are trying to destroy as their refuge," Danga said.

He added: "For all we know, they (terror suspects) may one day get out because of bail, and right now we do not know where Dawud Santos is. We can't find him; he is nowhere to be seen."

Danga did not identify the media personality he was referring to.

He also did not mention Santos' bail again, giving reporters the impression the military was not pursuing a case against the media man.

But a senior intelligence officer yesterday said that the information on Babao that was passed on to Ms Arroyo needed to be "verified."

"He (Babao) was there during the bail posting. [But] is there anything wrong if he wants to post bail in favor of others? He probably has a lot of money," the officer said.

Cops keep peace but no respite from politics

From page A1

had come to beseech the dead to "enlighten" her to resign.

Led by "running priest" Fr. Robert Reyes, the fewer than 20 protesters carried a streamer with a drawing of Ms Arroyo's face on a gravestone and the letters "R.I.P."—for "Resign Immediately *Pekel* (Fraud).

"We are praying to our martyrs and saints to intercede with God to bring enlightenment to our leaders, especially (Ms Arroyo)," Reyes said.

Van robbed

Police reported no major incidents of lawlessness as of nightfall.

"The situation so far in the country is generally peaceful," police spokesperson Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said.

"There were minor incidents like missing children, lost items and a few emergency calls," Bataoil said.

In Quezon province, three armed men robbed 13 occupants of a van in Quezon province but police collared them later in Laguna.

One of the suspects, accused by one of the victims of caressing her breasts, said: "*Panakot lang ho yon* (That was just to frighten her)."

Police shield

Altogether, the Metro Manila police command deployed some 2,300 lawmen to protect the 69 cemeteries in the metropolis.

But they gave closer attention to Metro Manila's eight "notable" cemeteries: The Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City, North Cemetery in Manila, La Loma Cemetery and the Himlayang Pilipino in Quezon City, the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City, and Loyola Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City and Marikina City, and the Manila South Cemetery in Makati City.

Watching from the air

PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao flew in a helicopter to inspect traffic routes and cemeteries in Luzon. Security had been tightened in "soft targets," such as public markets and cemeteries, following reports that the Abu Sayyaf might launch attacks to retaliate against a court decision condemning three of its members to death for the deadly bombing of a passenger bus in Makati on Valentine's Day.

* * *

At 6:45 a.m., the President, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and their children arrived with more than a dozen bodyguards at the Manila North Cemetery to pray at the graves of the First Gentleman's relatives. They left after about 45 minutes.

Susan walks

Two hours later, actress Susan Roces came to visit the grave of her husband, the late actor and opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

Unlike Ms Arroyo, whose convoy of vehicles was allowed inside, Roces walked from the main entrance gate to the Poe family plot, catching off guard cemetery officials who had been ready to open another gate closer to the Poes' plot for Roces.

* * *

Police said about 20 members of the FPJ for President Movement tried to conduct a signature campaign at the North Cemetery for the ouster of Ms Arroyo.

Police Supt. Romulo Sapitula said the group left when "they felt that the public was irked."

Public now listening

Manila Police District chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, whose force was also in charge of the South Cemetery, observed that the public was more observant of the prohibitions laid down by the authorities.

"I could say it is more organized now, and I am glad that the public has been very cooperative with us," Bulaong said.

* * *

Officials said there were fewer visitors to some cemeteries this year compared to previous years, presumably because of the rains.

Edilberto de la Cruz, assistant South Cemetery administrator, said there were roughly 15,000 people within the cemetery's premises at any given time yesterday, compared to about 35,000 last year.

Fewer knives

At the Manila North Cemetery, Supt. Romulo Sapitula said the police had seized 44 bladed weapons as of 1 p.m. yesterday, compared to 394 assorted blades—including garden shears, fan and butcher knives, and jungle bolos—confiscated the previous 24 hours.

Only one bottle of liquor was confiscated yesterday compared to Monday's five bottles.

Hawkers, tattoos

Metrowide, police searches yielded about 1,000 bladed weapons as well as other contraband items, like liquor.

"There are still some who forget about our warning. It (bringing in contrabands) has become a force of habit to them," Querol said. ***With reports from Jocelyn R. Uy, Nancy Carvajal, Margaux C. Ortiz***

Rich and poor worlds apart even in death

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

SCENES AT TWO CEMETERIES yesterday showed the growing gap between the elite and the poor.

From the level of security implemented to the type of food being sold, the posh Loyola Memorial Park and the crowded Barangka Public Cemetery in Marikina City seemed worlds apart, even if they are just separated by a few hundred meters.

Security was strict at Loyola, where personalities like actress Nida Blanca and President Macapagal-Arroyo's father-in-law, Ignacio Arroyo, are buried.

"We are implementing strict security measures. This is the biggest cemetery in the city," City Police Chief Senior Supt. Manuel Gaerlan said.

Policemen were very visible inside the 36-hectare memorial park. There were also a few soldiers around.

High school students volunteering as junior policemen inspected visitors, even tasting the contents of their bottled drinks and water jugs.

Food stalls were lined up inside the memorial park—from those selling donuts and sandwiches to those set up by fast food chains, like Shakey's, Yellow Cab, Greenwhich and Kentucky Fried Chicken.

The park also looked like a huge parking lot, boasting of expensive cars.

There were no cars inside the 2.5-ha Barangka Public Cemetery.

The narrow alleys were crowded with people, just as the cemetery is crowded with almost 30,000 dead, cemetery officer-in-charge Raymundo Ayuson said.

Because of the narrow space, tombs lie one on top of the other. Some piles are more than seven tombs high, forcing people to climb several meters just to light candles.

"*Pataasan ng mga nitso dito* (The niches are built higher here)," a 34-year-old woman, who gave her name only as Weng and who was visiting the tomb of her mother, said with a smile.

At Barangka, there were no stalls of popular food chains—only ambulant vendors selling candles and street food.

Save for a tent sheltering seven policemen, there were no other visible security personnel around.

And there were no inspections of visitors at the main entrance to the public cemetery.

Number of faith healers doubles due to 'hard times'

From page A1

president Florante Comia does not support faith healing per se.

"To convince us, their healing methods must be backed by scientific research and data. But we're not rejecting it outright. I will not tell people not to consult healers. The choice is still with the patient," Comia told the Inquirer.

He disclosed that "when I was still small, it was my (late maternal grandfather) Lolo Domingo who treated me every time I complained of abdominal pains and minor body pains."

Lolo Domingo Comia, who was 94 when he died in the early 1980s, "used *bulong-bulong* (whispers) and *tapal-tapal* (patches) with some Latin words written on them. He also healed by prayer to get rid of spirits that supposedly possessed the body that made the person sick."

Talk with elementals

During a recent visit to Borbon's healing center in Barangay Dumuclay, this reporter witnessed him perform one of his healing rituals. Using a young woman as a medium, Borbon, 46, "talked" with a *tikbalang* who had been tormenting a 30-something housewife from Quezon City.

The young woman's voice changed to that of a man's. Swearing and making threatening sounds, the lower half of the medium's face began to contort, resembling the features of a horse. Then, in a split second, the medium's face returned to its original form.

Nenita "Ka Neneng" Puyo-Asupardo of Tingga Labac, Batangas City, and Lourdes "Ka Odette" Medrano of Sambat, San Pascual town, use special oils and prayers in healing patients with common ailments and broken bones.

Asupardo, now in her late 40s, has been practicing faith healing since she was 17. She inherited her "special talent" from her late father Ambrocio, who was also a healer. Medrano, a former barangay health worker, has been practicing faith healing for more than 17 years.

Silent healer

Jerry "Tuklaw" Alingasa is from Barangay San Carlos, Rosario town, a short drive from Batangas City.

Alingasa, who is in his 30s, heals patients by tying their arms and legs with white handkerchiefs with inscriptions. His healing sessions may take up to five hours, depending on the severity of the problem.

He charges P200 for snake bites and P100 for bites caused by dogs, cats, cockroaches, pigs, monitor lizards, geckos, centipedes, scorpions and even dengue-carrying mosquitoes.

The healer, whom neighbors say does not talk much even to his patients, declined to be interviewed for this story.

FAITH HEALER Danni Borbon in Barangay Dunuclay, Batangas City, sometimes uses a young woman as a medium in one of his healing rituals. RAFFY LERMA

No charge

Unlike Alingasa, Borbon, Asupardo and Medrano do not charge for their services. Contributions, no matter how small, are always welcome, they said.

The notion that the ministrations of an individual healer, including psychic surgery, can cure illness has been popular in history, both here and abroad.

Faith healing has existed in the Philippines long before medical science. But many medical doctors believe it is a fraud.

Faith healing comes in many forms, the most simple and common of which is healing by prayer. Some healers lay their hands upon the body of a sick person or use herbal concoctions, oils and incantations.

Psychic surgery

Healing by psychic surgery is the most controversial. It is the process of opening up a human body and extracting tumors or diseases by hand and without anesthesia. The patient, however, does not feel any pain.

Some people think that world-famous healer Antonio Agpaoa started it all. But "long before [Agpaoa] was born, Eleuterio Terte was already performing healing and psychic surgery. In fact, Agpaoa studied under Terte," according to Inquirer columnist Jaime Licauco, an authority on inner mind development, the paranormal and mysticism.

Terte, a native of San Fabian, Pangasinan, died in May 1979 at the age of 79.

After Agpaoa's death in January 1982 came his chosen successor, Rudy Jimenez, and Rustico Villamor, the "healer with X-ray eyes" and the controversial Ramon "Jun" Labo Jr.

Magicians of God

Before El Shaddai's Bro. Mike Velarde became famous and close to the powers that be, there were Labo, Alex Orbito, Placido Palitayan. These faith healers could enter the inner sanctums of Malacañang. Both Labo and Orbito attended to the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

Licauco calls faith healers "magicians of God."

The Medical Advisor, a Time-Life publication, reported that the best choices for alternative treatments had become more plentiful than ever.

"Even as health care practitioners embrace the technological advances and the research breakthroughs occurring in modern medicine, they are turning with new interest to the alternative or natural therapies from medicine's foundations," it reported.

Alternative therapies "stand on extensive evidence of their benefits—even if those benefits sometimes defy scientific understanding."

According to the weekly magazine Christian Science Sentinel: "During the past few years, believers have claimed that prayer (by faith healers) has brought about recovery from anemia, arthritis, blood poisoning, corns, deafness, defective speech, multiple sclerosis, skin rashes, total body paralysis, visual difficulties and various injuries."

However, "most of these accounts contain little detail and many of the diagnoses were made without medical consultation," said the US publication.

Is it safe?

"Can anything be done about faith healing?" asked American doctor Stephen Barrett, who did an extensive study on the controversial issue.

"Believers don't see it as a problem, while most nonbelievers don't see it as a priority issue and have little sympathy for its victims," Barrett said.

Here are a few reminders that might help lower faith healing's toll in our society:

- There should be laws to protect children from medical neglect in the name of alternative healing.
- Media should be encouraged to do investigative studies on people who claimed to have been healed.
- Healers who use trickery to raise large sums of money should be prosecuted.

Malacañang scouting for new Customs commissioner

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

WITH THE EXPANDED VALUE-ADDED TAX in place, Malacañang is moving to consolidate its main revenue collection arms by revamping the Bureau of Customs while keeping the status quo at the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

A source said President Macapagal-Arroyo would announce this month a new customs commissioner because of her dissatisfaction with the performance of officer-in-charge Alexander Arevalo.

A Malacañang source said the President was going through a short list of nominees, which includes former Valenzuela Rep. Magtangol Gunigundo and customs legal expert Greg Chavez.

Arevalo, a former military officer and an aide to former President Fidel Ramos, was tapped by the President to take over the BOC post vacated by Albert Lina who resigned along with other Cabinet secretaries collectively known as the Hyatt 10 on July 8.

But since his takeover, BOC collections had fallen sharply. The Department of Finance reported last month that customs collections fell short of its collection goal by P1 billion to P12.6 billion.

But while Malacañang was eager to replace the BOC chief, the President wanted to maintain the status quo at the BIR in order to ensure continuity in the first few months of the implementation of the expanded VAT, according to the source.

The source said the President was not considering any replacement for acting BIR Commissioner Jose Mari Buñag.

Buñag was appointed OIC of the BIR vice Guillermo Parayno who was part of the Hyatt 10 that called for the resignation of Ms Arroyo to solve the worsening political crisis in the country.

The DOF has insisted that it is on track to hit its budget deficit target of P180 billion this year, from P187 billion last year, despite poor revenue collections by the BOC.

Prices on 1st day . . .

From page A1

Trade Secretary Peter Favila said this was the finding of the teams under his department, which went to public markets and stores around the country to monitor the prices of goods.

Favila attributed the stable prices to government efforts to inform the public about the VAT law. But he also said that prices did not move because of the low demand for goods yesterday, a holiday.

He said prices of goods may go up 2 to 5 percent because of higher fuel costs.

Besides petroleum products, electricity, domestic transport by air and sea, medical and legal services, and works of art, literary works and musical compositions are now covered by VAT.

The Department of Finance said the public should go to the DTI to report abnormal price increases.

Price-watch network

A nongovernment price-watch network will also check the impact of VAT on prices of basic goods and agricultural products, according to a militant farmers' group.

The "agricultural price-monitoring network" seeks to disprove the government claim that VAT will not drive up the prices of basic commodities, the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) said.

"We are now mobilizing our chapters all over the country to monitor the prices of all farm inputs, from fertilizers and pesticides to carabao rentals, to see whether these have gone up," KMP secretary general Danilo Ramos said.

"We will also monitor markets to see if traders are cashing in on VAT, because at farm gate prices, we peasants are always disadvantaged with a kilo of *palay* (unhusked rice) being sold for as low as P4.50, while unscrupulous landlords and traders sell them at the market for at least P18 when husked," he said.

Ramos said he expected at least a 20-percent increase in the price of rice.

Basic service for poor

Malacañang reiterated that the tax was not antipoor. "In fact, this is propoor because the revenues to be generated will be used to finance basic services for the poor," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) is confident it can collect P4 billion to P5 billion from the expanded VAT this year and P77.6 billion in 2006.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said revenues from the VAT law would help address the country's budget deficit.

"This administration will make sure that every centavo of fresh revenues generated by this law will redound to the people's benefit and welfare through better health care, improved quality of education, job and livelihoods and major infrastructure," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

Malacañang has allocated at least 20 percent of the increase in tax collections from VAT to environmental conservation, public education, health insurance premiums and agriculture modernization. But the fund will only be available for spending by local government units after three years.

It's a sin to lie

Militant groups dismissed the government line that the VAT would affect the poor the least.

"It is a bigger sin to lie to the people by telling them that VAT is not antipoor, that it is for infrastructure and services when the fact is it is not. All revenues that will be derived from taxes are not even enough to finance government's budget deficit and debt payments," Sanlakas leader Wilson Fortaleza said.

Fortaleza, also Freedom from Debt Coalition vice president, cited last year's debt payments ratio compared to debt service. Last year's total debt payments amounted to P601.7 billion while only P598 billion was collected from taxes.

Fortaleza said the same was going to happen this year and the next. Debt payments for this year will reach P687 billion while tax collection is expected only at P706.2 billion. For 2006, debt payments will reach P720 billion while target tax collection is only about P800 billion.

"The average middle-class Filipino family is knee-deep in debt and is hardly eking out a living. How can they expect us to believe that those below the poverty line will fare any better?" Eleanor de Guzman, Anakbayan secretary general said.

"Our studies show that P123.60 will be added to the poor's daily expenses once the VAT kicks off," De Guzman said.

Although basic goods are exempt from the VAT, food products such as meat and vegetables are sure to be affected by the expected rise in the cost of transportation, she said.

Exemptions

Because VAT is a consumption tax, those who consume more goods and services will be taxed more, according to the DOF.

The DOF said that about 83 percent of the VAT will be paid by the wealthier half of the Philippine population and that 17 percent will be paid by the poorest 50 percent.

Basic commodities, particularly nonprocessed food items purchased by poor families, or those whose annual income is P60,000 or below, are exempt from VAT, Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan said.

"As affirmed by the DTI and the DA, the expanded VAT is not antipoor. In fact, it recognizes the needs of the poor by exempting basic commodities and socially sensitive products from VAT," BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag said.

Among the commodities exempt from VAT are food and rice. Also exempt are educational services rendered by both public and private schools, books, newspapers, magazines, lease of residential houses not exceeding P10,000 monthly, sale of low-cost houses and lots not exceeding P2.5 million, sales by persons and establishments earning not more than P1.5 million annually such as sari-sari stores, *carinderias* and street vendors.

Buñag said the VAT system allowed manufacturers of sardines, milk, noodles, sugar and cooking oil to credit against their output VAT a presumptive input VAT equivalent to 4 percent of the value of their purchases of primary agricultural products used in the production of these goods.

"While admittedly it is resented by many, especially the end-consumers, its long term effects will be beneficial in ensuring a sustainable and continuous growth of the economy," he said.

Casket of protests

To protest the expanded VAT, a handful of Sanlakas activists tried yesterday to march on C.M. Recto en route to Chino Roces Bridge (formerly Mendiola) with a casket symbolizing the sufferings of the Filipino people.

Members of the Partido ng Manggagawa, Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino and Sanlakas paraded a casket on Morayta and Recto streets leading to the bridge.

The marchers were blocked in front of the University of the East-Recto by Manila police and were pushed back to the corner of Morayta Street where a short rally was allowed. *With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr., Norman Bordadora and DJ Yap*

HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND

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The Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-IBIG Fund) is inviting offers for lease by way of individual Sealed Bids, real property (land) for commercial use with various sizes located at Manila Harbour Center, City of Manila.

Bidding Guidelines will be available at the Office of the Vice President, Fund Management Group, Rm. 407, Atrium of Makati Building, Makati Avenue, City of Makati beginning October 26, 2005.

Pre-bid conference shall be held on November 9, 2005 at 2:00 p.m., Rm 602, 6th Floor, Multi Purpose Hall, Atrium of Makati Building, Makati Avenue, City of Makati. Schedule of submission and opening of bids shall be announced during the said conference.

The Home Development Mutual Fund reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality or accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the HDMF. Further, the Fund assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in participating in this bidding.

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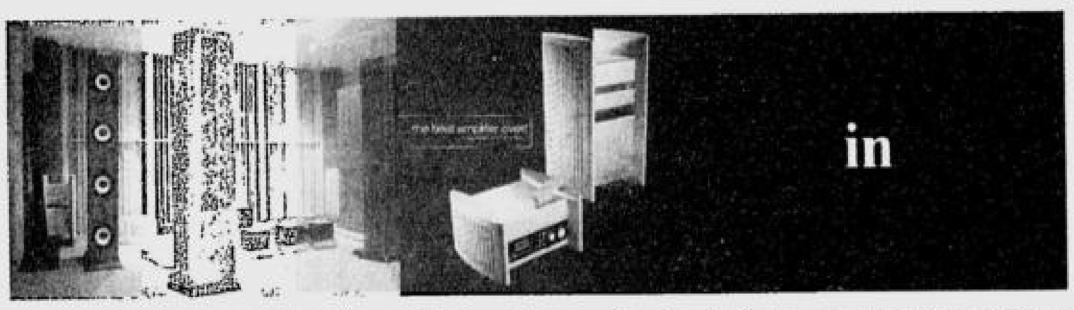
EMMA LINDA B. FARIA
SVP-Technical Support

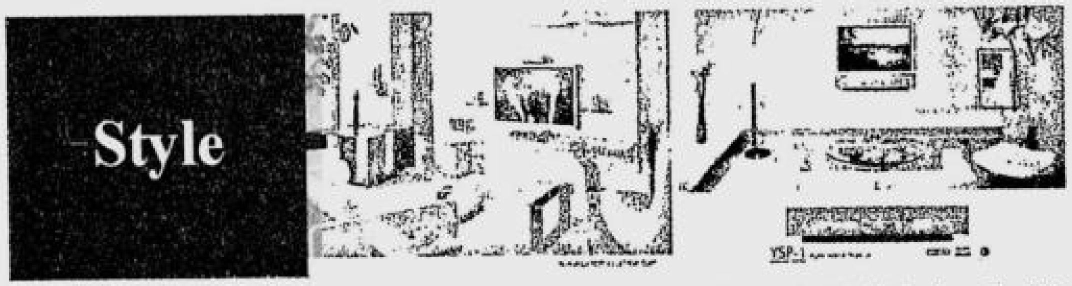
(PDI—Oct. 26 & Nov. 2, 2005)

J. R. Pecaoco, acknowledged to have introduced the audiophile tradition in the Philippines, believes that Home Entertainment is a perfected craft and science. It was a hobby and philosophy that he pursued when he was 17 that became a passion of his and the main business line of his Listening Group of Companies. The group includes: Listening in Style at the EDSA Shangri-la Plaza Mall; Digital Cinema in Style at the Powerplant Mall, Rockwell Center; and D-Cinema in Style at the Festival Mall, Alabang. All of the group's showrooms are well conceived shopper's place, a perfect blend of technique and emotions indeed. Today, The Listening Group is acclaimed as the most awarded specialty boutique Group servicing the Home Entertainment Industry.

J.R., as friends call him, is committed to educate, to make available the experience, to develop die hard and discriminating aficionados and provide various financial options to acquire entertainment packages of choice. In pursuit of this business charisma, The Listening Group of Companies has organized an exhibit at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Manila this November 5 and 6 from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Admission is free. Grand performances are slated at the combined Kamagong and Tangile Function rooms at the 4th floor. Visitors will be treated to more intimate performances at the 6th floor, Suites 608 to 612. All purchase options are offered and can be privately discussed at Suite 614. Rare and collectible give-away will be given out to first 150 component set buyers daily. Visitors will be treated to real-life performances of audio-video brand giants. Audiophiles will definitely feast on live performances of Halcro Audio T+A Systems, Krell Audio, Conrad Johnson, Boothroyd Stuart, Meridian, Plinius Audio, Wilson Speakers, Dynaudio, Runco, Genesis Audio and Transparent Cables. Jim Shannon, Gary Koh, Robert Hagemann, Devy Uiya regional technical and sales representatives will make presentations and be available for consultations. Other special guests include CEOs and key officers of famous home brands.



Cinema enthusiasts will definitely be awed by the wide array of audio-visual set-ups that start from as low as Php17,500 to what your bank account can provide for a new 5.1 surround sound standard. Each component of an audio or video ensemble is an art piece by itself that compliments various lifestyle options one can subscribe to. One can opt for varied choices of combinations to select from that will best fit their interior designs with each delivering a definite architectural conceptual statement.



Technique and emotions do not necessarily come as expensive one may imagine it to be. Highlighted as affordable tech product both for corporate use and home applications is the perfect combination of YES Visualax 32" LCD/TV monitor and the stand alone Yamaha YSP-1 Digital Sound Projector. Likewise featured is the Panasonic 65" Plasma system solution with the latest three-chip digital video processor that delivers unparalleled image detail for an incredible acquisition price. Other Yamaha Home A-V packages are likewise performing giving all visitors wider array of options to choose from that best fit their budget. Nobody does it better than The Listening in Style Group who provides integrated services to all clients. Visit the exhibit or visit them at display lounges at malls listed herein.

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Concom head eyes Clark as federal capital

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

IF THE HEAD OF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's Consultative Commission on Charter Change had his way, he would divide the Philippines into 12 federated regions or states with their own local governments and legislatures and move the capital from Manila to Clark in the President's home province of Pampanga.

The country, to be known as the Federal Republic of the Philippines, will be government by a Prime Minister and a 350-member unicameral Parliament which will elect a ceremonial President or Head of State.

These are some of the salient features of a draft constitution for a new federal system of government presented to the commission or Concom by the Citizens' Movement for a Federal Philippines headed by Jose Abueva, former president of the University of the Philippines who also chairs the 55-member commission set up by Ms Arroyo to study and propose Charter changes.

Both the President and Abueva have advocated revising the Philippine Constitution to provide for shift to a federal government with a unicameral parliament or legislature.

Abueva himself presented his group's proposal to the Concom, which had been mandated to undertake nationwide public consultations to gauge the people's sentiments on the issue.

While the Concom committee on the future structure of the republic has yet to act on Abueva's draft constitution, it has adopted his proposal to phase in the new federal structure of government over a period of 10 years.

Under Abueva's proposal, the national government will be known as "The Federasyon" and the seat of power will be located in Clark, Pampanga, which will be renamed "New Manila." The federal government will have power over national security, defense and declaration of war, foreign relations, currency, external trade, citizenship and immigration, civil and political rights, suffrage, federal civil service, justice, posts and telecommunications, transportation, taxation and customs, national budget, regulation of the media, social security.

The regions will be organized into 12 autonomous and co-equal estados or states, with their own governors, state assemblies and state councils. They will have primary jurisdiction over state or local elections, state civil service, state justice, operation of public transport, licensing of public utilities, state socio-economic planning and finance, taxation and customs, agriculture and fisheries, environment and natural resources, industrial development and mining, waterworks, enforcement of state laws and law and order, education and cultural and sports development, local infrastructure, entertainment and amusement, marriage and legal separation.

Real power will be wielded by the Prime Minister, who will be elected from among the Members of Parliament. The premier will appoint members of the Cabinet from among the MPs and will also be the commander-in-chief of all the armed forces.

The legislative executive powers of the federal government would be vested in the unicameral Parliament, whose members will serve for five years.

HEROES OF MEDICINE
Unilab chair Jocelyn Campos Hess leads the awarding ceremonies of the 15th Dr. Jose P. Rizal Memorial Awards (JPRMA) held recently at the Intercontinental Hotel Manila. The JPRMA, a collaboration between Unilab and the Philippine Medical Association (PMA), is an annual search for distinguished Filipino doctors whose endeavors are driven by their unconditional commitment to the profession and genuine concern for others. In her message, chair Jocelyn Campos Hess said that as Rizal is a hero to the nation, so too are these distinguished doctors heroes to their profession. From left are Unilab president and CEO Carlos C. Ejercito, PMA president Modesto Llamas, Unilab chair Jocelyn Campos Hess, Dr. Carmelo Alfiler (government service), Dr. Ramon F. Abarquez (academe and research), Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, chair of the Board of Judges, Dr. Serafin Hilvano (clinical practice) and Dr. Rimando Saguin (community leadership).

DOS PALMAS KIDNAPPING

2 terror suspects fall in Baguio

BAGUIO CITY—THE POLICE ON SAT-urday arrested two men here on suspicion of involvement in the 2001 abduction of Filipinos and foreign tourists from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan by the Abu Sayyaf terror group.

The family of Amil Salih had reported him missing since last week, until the Baguio City police informed them he was in a police safe house in Metro Manila being held on charges of involvement in the kidnap case, according to Bedejim Abdullah, an Islamic scholar here.

SPO2 Viyo Hidalgo, city police spokesperson, said he had no other information on Salih's arrest except to confirm that he was taken to Metro Manila last week.

But Salih, a native of Basilan and a volunteer kitchen helper at the local Almaarif Educational Center, the largest Islamic institute in Northern Luzon, had been living in Baguio since 1997, leading school officials to believe his arrest "was a mistake," Abdullah said.

Police sources said a man identified only as Mario, a plumber at the same Islamic school, was arrested with Salih.

Sources in Baguio's intelligence community said Salih had been identified by witnesses in Basilan as "Abu Tagalog," a key Abu Sayyaf player in the Dos Palmas abductions.

The bandits left a trail of violence through the southern Philippines as they dragged their hostages through the jungle and later beheaded some of them, including American tourist Guillermo Sobero, to stall rescue efforts.

At one point, they were trapped in a Basilan church only to manage to slip away, in an escape that drew sharp criticism for the military, which was accused of letting the terrorists and their hostages get away in exchange for a large bribe.

The whole ordeal ended with the deaths of hostages Martin Burnham, an American missionary, and Edibora Yap, a Filipino nurse, in a crossfire with pursuing government troops. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Romulo meets with object of FVR's ire, Negroponte

By Volt Contreras

NEGROPONTE

ROMULO

FOREIGN SECRETARY ALBERTO ROMULO met over the weekend with the American official former President Fidel Ramos had said could shed light on a US report the latter was plotting the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo – but the matter never came up.

John Negroponte, former US ambassador to Manila and now the US Director of National Intelligence, called on Romulo at the Philippine Embassy in Washington DC on Saturday, Oct. 29.

What he got was a briefing from Romulo on recent developments in Manila, including the government's counterterrorism efforts and its "gains in fiscal reforms, the economy, the peace process, reconciliation, and political and constitutional reforms," a Department of Foreign Affairs statement issued late Monday said.

In return, Romulo was assured by Negroponte of the US government's "determination to further strengthen bilateral relations and its support for the democratic leadership of President Arroyo," the DFA statement said.

At a press conference on Oct. 29 (Manila time) on his return from an overseas trip, an irate Ramos had challenged the US government to explain the Feb. 24, 2005, report its embassy in Manila had sent to Washington linking him to an alleged coup plot against Ms Arroyo.

The 78-year-old ex-President had particularly demanded that Negroponte "override all these subordinates of his in the US Embassy to come out with the truth of the matter." This after he noted how the embassy had refused to comment on the issue.

According to the embassy report, which the INQUIRER headlined last week, Ramos supposedly gave his national former security adviser, Gen. Jose Almonte (ret.), until last June to implement the ouster plan.

Ramos then warned of serious repercussions in RP-US relations if the embassy's silence continued. He described the embassy report as "nasty, not only to me personally but even nastier to the people of the Philippines."

Romulo, who left for the US last Thursday, is expected back in Manila tomorrow.

Naia starts 'scarecrow' operations

NO. THEY ARE NOT out to stage rallies against the President.

But authorities at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport are taking no chances and have launched 'dispersal operations' against migratory birds.

Naia operations chief Octavio Lina said ground personnel have started employing noisemaking devices and even "scarecrows" to keep off migratory birds from the runway where they can pose danger to aircraft.

Lina said these measures were purely for aircraft and are not considered part of Naia's bird flu watch, which is directed more at arriving passengers and animal cargo.

He said birds fleeing the onset of winter in China have long been a concern for the airport this time of the year, since even a single feathered flyer sucked into an airplane's engine can cause damage that would be costly to repair.

This year's early arrivals at Naia are mostly egrets and the smaller plovers, Lina said.

To shoo them away, Naia uses an alarm device whose pitch or tempo has to be changed from time to time lest the birds get used to the sound and eventually just ignore it, he said. His men has also installed "scarecrows" on the grassy fields bordering the runway.

As warnings against a possible avian flu pandemic escalate around the world, health and environment officials have ordered a strict watch on migratory birds that arrive in the country *Volt Contreras*

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DLI Ampicillin cap. 500 mg	✓	7.70	14.15	6.45/cap
DLI Chloramphenicol cap. 500 mg	✓	3.70	37.75	34.05/cap
DLI Chloramphenicol susp. 125 mg/5 ml 60 ml	✓	49.00	394.75	345.75/bot
DLI Co-trimoxazole tab (TM-160mg SMZ-800mg)	✓	2.70	26.00	23.30/tab
DLI Co-trimoxazole cap. (TM-80mg SMZ-400mg)	✓	2.50	14.80	12.30/cap
DLI Co-trimoxazole susp. (TM-40mg SMZ-200mg)	✓	31.00	115.75	84.75/bot
Anti-cough (Para sa Ubo)				
DLI Bromhexine HCL syrup 4 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓	30.00	74.75	44.75/bot
DLI Carbocisteine cap. 500 mg	✓	2.50	12.25	9.75/cap
DLI Carbocisteine susp. 100 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓	29.00	87.25	58.25/bot
Anti-diarrhea (Para sa Pagtatae)				
DLI Loperamide cap. 2mg	✓	1.30	10.25	8.95/cap

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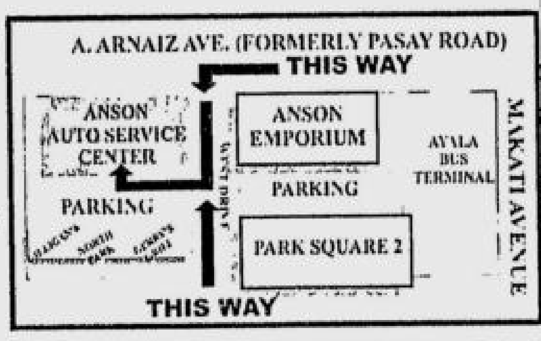

OPEN MONDAY TO SUNDAY

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

India links Pakistan to weekend blasts

NEW DELHI—INDIAN PRIME MINISTER MANMOHAN SINGH told Pakistan on Monday that weekend bomb blasts in Delhi were probably linked to foreign elements, while Indian officials said Pakistan could have been involved.

Pakistani officials responded by urging New Delhi to provide evidence of the involvement of Pakistani militant groups in the blasts which killed 59 people, and promising to cooperate with the investigations.

Singh made the comments when Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf called him to offer condolences after Saturday's blasts at two crowded markets, an Indian foreign ministry statement said.

The blasts came as residents of the Indian capital shopped for sweets and gifts ahead of Diwali, the biggest Hindu festival, on Tuesday, and Eid-al-Fitr, the most important festival on the Muslim calendar later this week.

"The prime minister told the president of Pakistan that the country was outraged at these heinous acts of terrorism," the statement said.

"The prime minister again drew the president's attention to Pakistan's commitment to ending cross-border terrorism and said that we continue to be disturbed and dismayed at indications of the external linkages of terrorist groups with the Oct. 29 bombing, and said India expects Pakistan to act against terrorism directed at India."

Although Singh did not name Pakistan, Indian foreign ministry officials said he was referring to anti-Indian militant groups based in Pakistan.

Pakistan's foreign ministry said Islamabad was ready to extend full cooperation in the investigation.

"The president has said we are ready to cooperate in the investigations," spokesperson Tasnim Aslam said. "But evidence has to be shared with us.

"In the absence of that it will be just a claim. While pointing fingers on any Pakistan entity, they should also share evidence with us." An obscure Kashmiri militant group, Islami Inqilabi Mahaz (Islamic Revolutionary Group), claimed responsibility on Sunday for the attacks.

Indian security officials and analysts said the group was probably a front for Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (Force of the Pure), which is among several Islamist militant groups fighting Indian rule in Kashmir.

A Lashkar spokesperson told Reuters on Monday the group was not involved in the attacks and had no links to the Mahaz.

Analysts, speaking before the Indian prime minister's comments, said the Delhi blasts would damage a two-year peace process between India and Pakistan but were unlikely to lead to a breakdown.

In Delhi police said they were pursuing several leads.

Many people were still trying to trace dead or missing relatives and friends.

Reuters

Rosa Parks is 1st woman to lie in the US Capitol

WASHINGTON—TENS OF thousands of people, including top politicians, filed Monday by the casket of civil rights icon Rosa Parks in the US Capitol, as she was hailed for her role in the battle for racial equality.

There were huge lines outside the seat of the US government as blacks and whites, young and old, paid respect to the seamstress who refused to give up her bus seat to a white man in 1955, sparking a movement for black civil rights.

Parks, who died at 92 a week ago, was the first woman ever to lie in honor under the soaring dome of the Capitol's Rotunda, an accolade usually reserved for presidents and eminent public servants.

President George W. Bush and his wife Laura opened the viewing on Sunday, placing a wreath on her coffin. Dozens of senators and congressmen joined the public paying respects Monday.

On Sunday, Bush signed a decree ordering that US flags be flown at half-staff in her honor at the White House and all public buildings and grounds around the country on the day of her funeral.

Condoleezza Rice, America's first black woman secretary of state, paid her own tribute to Parks at a service in Montgomery on Sunday. Rice grew up in Alabama during the rights movement. "I can honestly say that without Mrs Parks, I probably would not be standing here today as secretary of state," she said.

Many blacks in line said she had an immense impact on their lives.

AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Car bomb kills 20

BASRA, Iraq—At least 20 people were killed when a car bomb tore through a crowded market in the southern Iraqi port city of Basra late Monday, security sources said. "Twenty people, mostly civilians, were killed and 45 wounded in the car bomb attack in a crowded market in Basra," an interior ministry source said, adding that the toll was expected to climb. The bomb exploded as a police patrol passed, tearing into a crowded market near a newly opened shopping mall and destroying at least four cars, an AFP photographer said. *AFP*

Bush picks Alito for SC

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush on Monday nominated a conservative appeals court judge, Samuel Alito, to the Supreme Court in a move that may heal a rift in the weakened leader's Republican party. In a joint appearance at the White House, Bush called Alito "one of the most accomplished and respected judges in America" and urged the US Senate to hold a confirmation vote by the end of the year. If approved, Alito would replace retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman named to the highest court in the United States and frequently the deciding vote when the nine justices take up volatile issues like abortion. *AFP*

4th deadliest month in Iraq

WASHINGTON—The killings of six more US soldiers in roadside explosions in Iraq Monday raised the US death toll for October to 93, making it the fourth deadliest month for the US military since the March 2003 invasion. The week's casualties included the highest ranking army officer killed in action since the start of the war, Col. William Wood, a defense official said. Lawrence DiRita, the chief Pentagon spokesperson, said there was no single explanation for the increase in US deaths but said it reflected the growing power and sophistication of insurgent bombings. *AFP*

Sharon wants militants disarmed

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon made future progress in the Middle East peace process conditional on the disarmament of Palestinian militant groups Monday as he vowed to expand Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Golan Heights. Delivering his first address to parliament since withdrawing troops and settlers from the Gaza Strip after a costly 38-year presence, the prime minister said the onus was now on the Palestinians to make painful concessions toward peace. "The Palestinians must understand that only a determined fight against terrorism, including the dismantling of its organizations, will ensure the calm to which we all aspire," he said *AFP*

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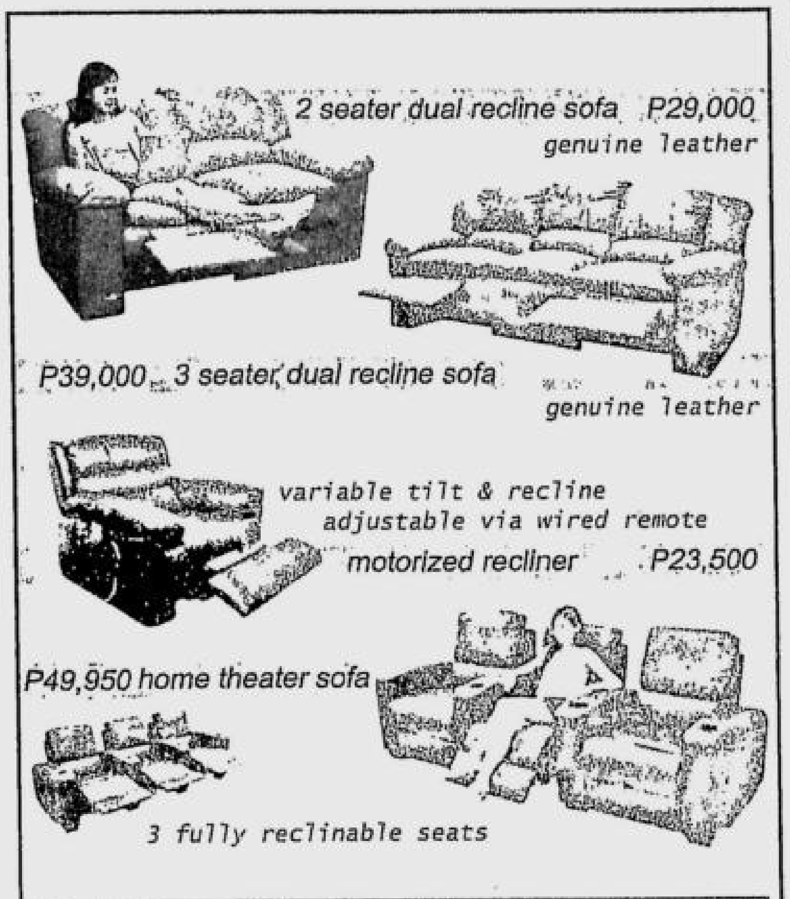
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UN demands Syri

UNITED NATIONS—THE SECURITY Council voted unanimously on Monday for a resolution ordering Syria to cooperate fully with a UN investigation of the assassination of a former Lebanese prime minister or face possible "further action."

The chief UN investigator, German prosecutor Detlev Mehlis, already has named Syrian officials as suspects in the assassination in the plot to kill Rakif Hariri and 22 others in a Feb. 15 bombing in Beirut.

In a recent report, he said the killing was organized by Syrian security officials and their Lebanese allies.

"We have affirmed our just demands of the Syrian government—and made it clear that failure to comply with these demands will lead to serious consequences from the international community," Secretary of
doleezza Rice told the 15-member c

Unanimity was achieved in th
Council after the United States, F
Britain, sponsors of the resolution,
the last minute to drop an explic
economic sanctions against Syria.
Russia, China and Algeria were ex
abstain, diplomats said.

Instead, the resolution warns t
"could consider further action" if
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who Mehlis wants to question. Mel
turned to Beirut to continue his inve

Syrian Foreign Minister Fa
Shara sharply criticized Mehlis
ing his country without due pr

White House plays down revamp calls

WASHINGTON—THE WHITE House on Monday played down calls for a staff shake-up after the indictment of Vice President Dick Cheney's former top aide, Lewis Libby, who will make his first court appearance this week on criminal charges stemming from a CIA-leak probe.

At his arraignment on Thursday, Libby, Cheney's longtime chief of staff, is expected to plead innocent to charges of obstructing justice, perjury and making false statements.

Top White House aide Karl Rove, who remains under investigation in the probe, received a word of confidence from the White House amid Democratic calls for his resignation.

"He continues to do his duties," White House spokesperson Scott McClellan said of Rove, Bush's top political adviser and deputy chief of staff. When asked if Bush retained confidence in Rove, McClellan said: "People who work here at the White House have the confidence of the president." Members of both parties have urged Bush to shake up his White House staff. *Reuters*

Canada detect flu virus in wi

OTTAWA—THE H5 AVIAN INfluenza virus has been found in wild migratory birds in Canada, officials said Monday, but it is unlikely the deadly H5N1 strain threatening Asia and Europe and there is no threat to human health.

The virus, whose subtype must still be determined, was detected in 28 ducks in the eastern province of Quebec and five in Manitoba in central Canada out of approximately 4,800 samples, said Jim Clark of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

"These findings do not indicate that we are dealing with a virus strain capable of causing significant illness. The evidence we've observed strongly indicates that these healthy birds were not infected with the same virus that is currently present in Asia," Clark said during a press conference.

The H5N1 bird flu virus has killed more than 60 people and prompted the culling of 140 million birds in Asia in the past two years.

In a statement, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency said the birds tested in the national survey were healthy, and there was "no
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Shara said implicating top Syrian officials in Hariri's assassination was like charging US, Spanish and British authorities with involvement in Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in New York and Washington, the March 11, 2004, bombings in Madrid and July 7 attacks in London.

An angry British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw called Shara's comments "appalling," "absurd" and "the most grotesque and insensitive comparison." Rice later called Shara's speech "a tirade that made the the most bizarre connection."

The importance of the meeting was underlined by the attendance of 11 foreign ministers of the 15 council members.

They negotiated until minutes before the vote, which was presided over by Romanian Foreign Minister Mihai-Razvan Ungureanu.

The resolution, No. 1636, also calls for a financial freeze and travel ban on individual suspects to be named by the Mehlis commission or the Lebanese government. At the insistence of Russia, that demand was weakened and now any Security Council member can object to a name on such a list.

Mehlis' report touched close to the family of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. He cited possible involvement in the plot of Maher Assad, his brother, and Assef Shawkat, his brother-in-law and the chief of military intelligence.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the changes in the resolution removed "unnecessary and ungrounded threats." But he told reporters, "We want this statement to be followed by specific action" from Syria.

Algerian Foreign Minister Mohamed Bedjaoui said that as the only Arab council member, "I would like to state here loud and clear that the cowardly assassination ... must not under any pretext go unpunished." He called the killing "absolute evil" but cautioned against a "hasty threat of sanctions." The death of Hariri, an opponent of Syrian domination of his country, transformed Lebanon's political landscape.

Reuters

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is not unexpected," offi-
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important to clarify that
an influenza virus is not
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now that this virus in one
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wild birds around the
for hundreds or perhaps
ousands of years," Clark

AFP

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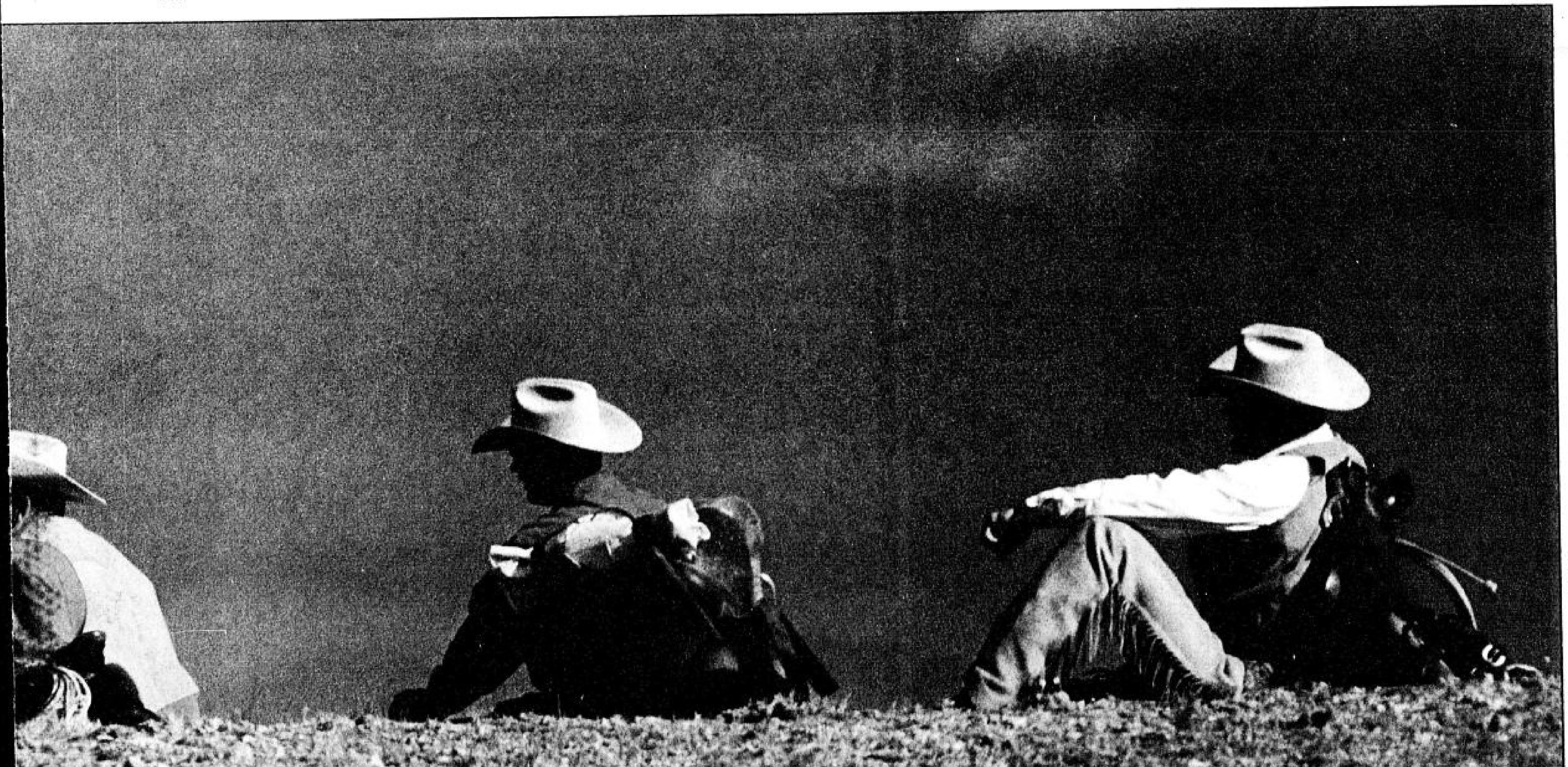

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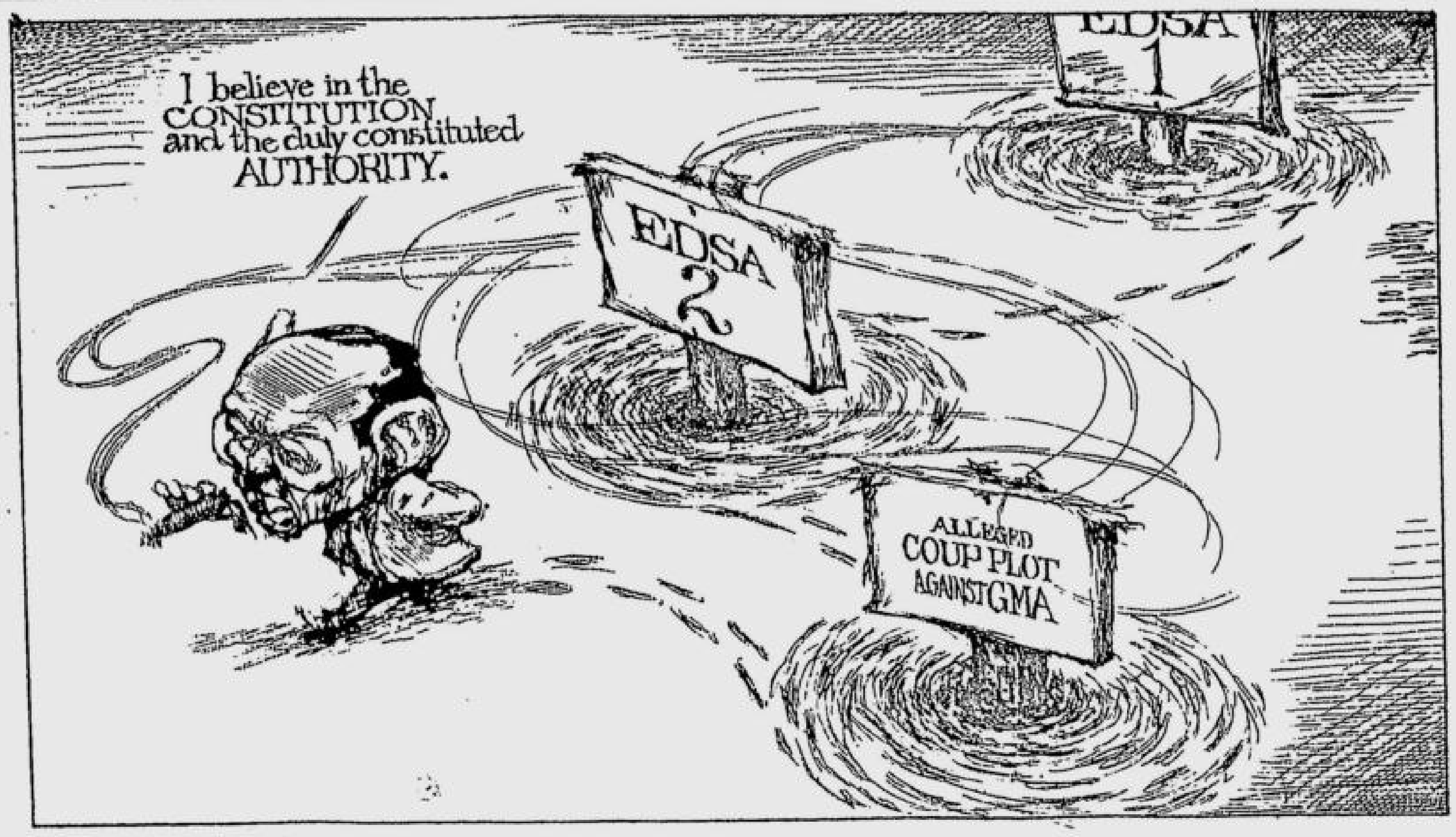
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Ghost reform

EDITORIAL

IT SEEMS A LIFETIME AGO, WHEN THEN AGRARIAN Reform Secretary Horacio Morales vowed that by 2004, the Estrada administration would complete the implementation of agrarian reform. The Estrada administration, of course, passed into history in 2001, three years before the self-imposed deadline of Morales—but not before Morales had accomplished some rather dramatic examples of land reform (in the Bondoc Peninsula in Quezon Province, and by approving guidelines covering banana plantations in Davao).

With three years still left (the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program expires in 2008), the Arroyo administration has never preached, much less attempted, as ambitious an investment in time and resources in land reform as its two predecessors. While President Fidel Ramos managed to distribute roughly 200,000 hectares a year while in office, and Estrada had vowed to distribute 260,000 hectares a year (toting up an average of 133,355 hectares a year in large part due to congressional sabotage, such as Sen. John Osmeña's depriving the DAR of its land acquisition budget), the Arroyo administration pegged its goals at a modest 100,000 hectares yearly, while consistently failing to accomplish even that. And yet beginning the end of 2001, the government needed to distribute 150,000 hectares a year, if the backlog of 1.19 million hectares were to be covered by the time the program expires.

It seems like a lifetime has passed since President Macapagal-Arroyo inked the "National Socio-Economic Pact of 2001" on Dec. 10, 2001, along with other government officials and representatives of the business sector and of civil society. With that she made a much publicized "promise" to have her husband's lands in Negros covered and distributed under the Voluntary Offer to Sell (VOS) scheme of CARP. This scheme was hailed at the time as "the most concrete and radical act of commitment to agrarian reform implementation by a President of the Philippines. With the land being voluntarily offered for CARP coverage, it was expected that the landholdings would be distributed as soon as possible."

It is now 2005, and what has the President done by way of reforming the Arroyos' own lands? Her brother-in-law, Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, told 68 farmworkers of the 157-hectare Hacienda Bacan in Barangay Guintubhan, Isabela, that the land "would not be under CARP anymore." Arroyo was reported as saying he had obtained a certificate from the National Economic and Development Authority authorizing the conversion of the hacienda from agricultural to industrial land. Such a conversion, would of course, be a way out of land reform, allowing the Arroyos to maintain ownership and control—and the profits—of the land.

But wasn't Hacienda Bacan placed under land reform by President Arroyo and didn't Ignacio Arroyo volunteer to sell the hacienda in 2001? The Land Bank of the Philippines, which assesses the value of agricultural lands, did not honor Ignacio's offer because the VOS form should have been signed by First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo, the registered owner of the hacienda. Thus, for lack of the appropriate signature, was one landholding essentially exempted from the consequences of the President's promises. Perhaps, when it came to her in-laws' lands, Ms Arroyo has been having lapses in judgment for some time.

Indeed, until the sudden zeal with which the government decided to dismantle the Cojuangcos' Hacienda Luisita, the present administration seemed content to go through the motions of land reform. It focused on parceling out what can easily be given away, while postponing action on the land holdings of people with clout, such as those of Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco in Negros and Mindanao, Roberto Benedicto in Negros, and Antonio Floirendo in Davao. With but three years left in the effectivity of the law, these big landowners can hope for some success in ultimately thwarting its provisions.

Surely no one would have imagined, back in 2001, that CARP would come to such an unseemly, brazen end, as it has obviously come to now. CARP is no longer even a program. It has become a political tool, and in traditional fashion, it is the President's enemies who pay and her relatives and friends who profit.

Do we need Palace permit to hear Mass?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

"UNEASY LIES THE HEAD THAT WEARS THE crown."

Now Ate Glue is learning the truth of this lament. It is a truth that cannot be hidden by cooperative congressmen, by disappearing co-conspirators and by foolishly loyal spinmasters. It is a truth that cannot be changed with millions of pesos or millions of denials.

It is a truth already learned earlier by many criminals who tried to evade justice. Fugitives who successfully evaded the long arm of the law for years finally had to give themselves up because living on the lam, with falsehoods weighing down their conscience, proved to be very difficult. You cannot trust anybody; you suspect everybody. You look at even your best friend with suspicion. You become a true paranoid. You cannot sleep; you cannot eat. Life as a fugitive is not worth living.

Life with a falsehood is even worse. A fugitive can evade his pursuers, but a guilty conscience is with you always everywhere you go. You cannot escape it.

Richard Nixon said after he resigned as president of the United States because of the Watergate scandal, that he felt as if a weight had been lifted from his shoulders. Watergate was the most difficult ordeal of his life, he said, and when he decided that the presidency was not worth all that, it was like a heavy cross had been taken off his back.

Criminals who surrender also mention similar feelings after they decide to face the music. And as we have seen right here, many of those who served time in prison came out changed persons, closer to God, and some even became preachers of the word of God. Admitting your mistake and doing penance are a cleansing process. You come out of it feeling clean and happy.

Why am I writing all this? Because I understand the pain Ate Glue must be suffering. Every day a new scandal is exposed. Every day more protest rallies are held. Every day a new threat comes. Every day there are more negative stories. When will it all end?

Sen. Dick Gordon said Ate Glue is like a boxer on the ropes being pummeled by her opponent. She fights on because she has pride; she doesn't want to be counted out; she wants to finish the bout. Her seconds should already be throwing in the towel but they don't because if she is TKO'd, the purses for future bouts would be much less, and therefore their pay would be that much less, too. They're thinking of themselves, not of the welfare of their fighter.

When will it end? Only when she is no longer in the hot seat. The suspense for the king with the sword of Damocles over his head never ends until the hair from which the sword hangs breaks or he gets out of the throne.

The root cause of Ate Glue's problems is that she has no right to sit on that throne. The people are convinced that she stole the presidency—not only once but twice—and they want her out of there. That is why they are protesting; that is why they are joining protest rallies, carrying placards, streamers and banners, braving sun, rain, water cannons and police truncheons. A number of them are squatters themselves but they don't want a squatter in Malacañang. The sense of justice of the common people is stronger than those whose duty is to render justice.

Ate Glue and her handlers thought that by killing the election protest in the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, the protest rallies would stop. They did not. They thought that if the impeachment complaint was blocked by cooperative congressmen, the rallies would stop. They did not; on the contrary, they became angrier. Now they think that if the rallies are denied permits, dispersed and doused with water, they would stop. They did not; the ralliers only became angrier. They think if opposition leaders are prevented from hearing Mass in churches near Malacañang, they would stop. They won't. No curtailment of human rights, no threat of martial law and emergency rule will stop the people's clamor for justice and honesty. The Spanish, American and Japanese conquerors were not able to stop them. Neither can Ate Glue and her cohorts.

Whoever advised Ate Glue to ban opposition leaders from attending Mass in the churches near Malacañang should be fired. That is the biggest boo-boo of Malacañang yet. Filipinos are very sensitive about their practice of their religion and they will feel very strongly against this ban.

Sure, the opposition leaders probably just want to get nearer to Malacañang and unfurl their banners and placards for Ate Glue to see. So what? What harm will that do? That would not take her away from the presidency that she is illegally occupying. It cannot do anything except irritate her. But she doesn't have to look at them if she doesn't want to (although it would be educational for her to find out what the people think). She makes it a point to leave the Palace anyway when rallies are scheduled nearby.

The curtailment of the right of the people—opposition or not—to hear Mass in a church of their choice is the worst violation of the Bill of Rights that Ate Glue's administration has done so far. It will only anger more people and more of them will join protest rallies, as well as the Church itself. Have people who don't agree with Ate Glue no right to God's blessings? Can't they pray for God's help like anybody else? Do the pro-GMA people have more rights in the eyes of God? Is Ate Glue now an apostle of God who has the authority to separate those who can hear Mass and those who can't? Are the churches near Malacañang reserved only for those who adore Ate Glue? Do the people now have to get a Malacañang permit to pray to God?

Bright spots

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE ARE BRIGHT SPOTS IN THE HORIZON. I spoke at the INQUIRER series on youth last week, and the theme was youth accomplishments over the past several years. I said I thought the kids had done a couple of things that boded well for the future.

The first was what they had made of the digital age. The power of digital technology I already saw some years ago during Edsa II. I've always said that media were part of what made Edsa II happen, but that was so in more ways than that they merely beamed or printed the news. They enabled Filipinos from all over the world to take part in Edsa II in real time through e-mails that expressed their sentiments. I know that the INQUIRER was deluged with e-mails and text messages during that time, many of which found their way to the online version.

Today, as Lourd de Veyra, who also spoke at the seminar, pointed out, blogs have become as ubiquitous on the Web as text messages on cell phones. "Blog" is short for "web log," which is a journal of sorts of individuals, paraded before their world in gory or glory detail. Notably by the youth, who have the energy, enthusiasm and grasp of the technology to put blogs up. The principle remains garbage in, garbage out, but as Lourd says, you would be astonished by the quality of writing that comes out of some of these blogs.

I got an idea of that only a few weeks ago when I edited an article on a young Filipina named Sheila Ann Manuel-Coggins. Sheila lives in Australia (she is married to an Australian) but works for a New York company as a blogger. She is no ordinary blogger, she is a Web log guide for About.Com, the portal used by one of every five people in the Internet. Guides are required to produce blogs that set the standards for others to follow. Which means A-one, top-of-the line, world-class, quality. Where Sheila has gone, many of her compatriots can always go after.

What makes all this exciting for me personally is that I feel it is going to revolutionize the way we make news or spread information. At the very least, blogs, or websites in general, which include the less personal variety, offer a challenge to traditional sources of information. Website searches spiked upward a couple of years ago when George W. Bush invaded Iraq, and while CNN and BBC were busy defending it, the websites were furiously condemning it, showing pictures and streaming video to press their point. Governments and media may still be able to "manufacture consent," to use Noam Chomsky's phrase, but they will be more hard put to do it in future. China has found it harder and harder to censor news with the Internet. And regulating the Internet is like trying to prevent the kids from getting to the porn sites: they'll find their way around the roadblocks. The funniest thing I've seen over the last few years is the phrase, "parental lock," on TV and the PC. That presumes the parents know EDTV or HDTV and DSL better than the kids. Some from my generation still use the manual typewriter.

More than this, the blogs and websites, or indeed the online version of media, should help to make information-making truly interactive. You have a situation where your version of news is instantly challenged or corrected online, you are going to have to make adjustments to it constantly. Or at least where warranted, which it often is. News becomes more open-ended rather than a finished product, an ongoing story rather than a truth etched in stone for 24 hours or how long the shelf life of truth lasts in most media. That may not be very exciting for information gatekeepers whose authority stands to be eroded, but it should be so for the rest of us.

Who knows? Maybe when PCs get around to the poorest Filipino household the way TV has, it might cure us of the itch to live in America. Why strain yourself—and get humiliated at the US Embassy—to go to America when you can summon the world to your doorstep? Why should Mohammed wish desperately to go to the mountain when the mountain is perfectly willing to go to Mohammed?

The second, and by no means less minor, thing is what the kids are into musically these days. Which is that most of them are in a band.

That phenomenon was confirmed by my audience, which claimed to have a brother or sister or cousin who had formed or joined a band. That was true in my own youth, which was the 1960s. Most neighborhoods or high school classes had kids who played the guitar and belonged to a band or at least a singing group. That phenomenon disappeared over the next few decades, only to come back today with a vengeance.

The vengeance comes not just in the form of quantity but of quality. It's not just that bands are multiplying like mushrooms (basketball's loss is music's gain, though I don't know that I can say the same thing for drugs), it's that the bands are playing their own music. By that I don't just mean their preferred music—dub as opposed to standards—I mean music they themselves wrote.

That is the true phenomenon. The bands of my generation did covers, the bands of this generation are doing their own songs. That, too, was confirmed by my audience which said that their brother or sister or cousin was hard at work coaxing from their brains melodies or lyrics or both for their bands. The principle remains green in, green out, but you'd also be astonished at the maturity of some of the compositions. I won't mention names lest the unnamed kill me. But that's what's exciting: In music at least, if not in national policy, among the youth at least, if not among the aged, Filipinos will no longer abide imitation. They quite literally want to play their music, to march to their own tune.

There are bright spots in the horizon, there are flowers pushing out from the rubble.

Reincarnating Evita

COMMENTARY

Roberto Guareschi

IF MYTHS COULD COME TRUE THROUGH sheer will power, Cristina Kirchner, the wife of Argentine President Néstor Kircher, would already be a 21st-century Evita Perón. But myths are a collective and mysterious construction. Otherwise, they would be for sale.

In Argentina's recent legislative election, Cristina Kirchner became a political force in her own right, making the Kirchners a ruling couple from now on—the second in the country's history after Juan Perón and Evita. Ms Kirchner was elected senator for the province of Buenos Aires, where much of the country's economic might is based. It is also where most of Argentina's poor live.

True, the Kirchner name helped, and perhaps tradition also played a part. After all, Isabelita—a very small woman in every sense and Perón's third wife after Evita—became the country's first female president only because she was Perón's widow.

Cristina Kirchner, however, is no small woman. As a lawyer and legislator since 1989, she enjoys a privileged role in developing the strategies of her husband's government. Unlike any first lady in Argentine history, she is capable and well prepared when discussing complex issues such as money laundering or labor law.

Yet myth-making was not absent on the night of her victory. Newspapers depicted her against the background of the Argentinean flag, with her head bathed in a halo of sunshine. The image seemed to evoke the Virgin of Luján (the religious figure who attracts the most worshippers in Argentina), as well as that of the Evita who was sanctified by the poor while still alive. It also seemed like an illustration of her authorized biography, entitled "Reina Cristina" (Queen Cristina).

Argentina is a country of strong women and more than one has become a myth that transcends cultures. The most recent is a women's collective, the Madres y Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo). These brave women constituted the only opposition that dared to confront the savage military junta in the late 1970s, demanding to know the fate of their "disappeared" children.

The other myth is, of course, Evita. But Cristina is no Evita. In the Argentina of the 1940s and 1950s, Evita gathered multitudes. In Cristina's victory, and that of her husband, there were no mass celebrations.

Perhaps this is just politics in the era of modern media. In her speeches, Cristina modulates her voice like Evita did. But, where Evita's voice was full of the "pathos" of poverty and injustice, of passion and tenderness, Cristina evokes more anger and defiance. No compassion is heard. Instead, there is defiance and self-affirmation: "They will not do that to me..."

Evita was the wife who would intercede before her husband to defend her "children," the crowds of "*descamisados*," or shirtless people. Her powerful myth made her a sort of primal woman. The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo became the same: they would put their motherhood above their lives. Defenseless against the state's power, they were invincible because they had nothing else to lose.

Cristina is partly a "wife" like Evita, but she doesn't portray herself as a mother figure. She is a woman with her own ideas, who will fight for them in the political project that she shares with her husband. It is a very modern model, perhaps in transition to something else.

But to what? Perhaps the key difference between Evita and Cristina is the fact that Evita, the "standard-bearer of the poor," was an actress hunting for her destiny when she met Perón. Cristina dreamed and built her project together with her husband from the start, acquiring more visibility every day.

That makes her akin to Hillary Clinton. Like the Clintons, the Kirchners knew from early on in their marriage that they wanted to reach the top, and the best way to do it, they concluded, was together. They are political partners.

Cristina loves being compared to Hillary. Bill Clinton's wife could run for president in 2008, and Cristina could do the same in 2007, if her husband doesn't pursue reelection, or in 2011, if he does, according to government officials. If Néstor and Cristina alternate as heads of state, they could do so indefinitely, because Argentina's constitution allows for only one consecutive reelection but no limit on the total number of electoral terms.

Marriage and political partnership can, in any case, keep the tandem intact. Few doubt that Bill Clinton will be a powerful force in America if his wife becomes president. Kirchner, too, is not going to retire and put his slippers on in 2007 or 2011 if Cristina heads the government.

This new "monarchical" presidential model deserves study by political scientists and jurists. But, as the Kirchners dream their mythic dreams, they will also be confronted with reality. And reality is even harder to shape than a myth.

Project Syndicate

Roberto Guareschi was for 13 years the executive editor of the newspaper Clarín in Buenos Aires. He is currently a writer and university lecturer.

'Doing nothing' at Sonya's

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

TAGAYTAY—HAVING DONE WITH OUR OBLIGATIONS to the family's deceased the previous weekend, we decided to drive up to this city to take advantage of the long break.

Our destination was Sonya's Country Inn Bed and Breakfast, for an overnight stay that would, we hoped, recharge our energies and provide us a respite not just from the big city's aggravations, but also from daily schedules and obligations.

We were staying at Sonya's on Halloween night, but were somewhat disappointed when we learned they had nothing special planned in observance of the "feast."

"I think it's too commercialized and Westernized," sniffed our gracious innkeeper Sonya Garcia when we playfully chided her for ignoring the night of trick or treat, ghouls and ghosts.

But still, we—or rather, I—came prepared. We had brought along a portable DVD player and I was planning some after-dinner Halloween fare, a showing of the suspense and supernatural movie "Hide and Seek" with Robert de Niro and Dakota Fanning.

But my children, those scaredy cats, had other plans. Instead, before dinner we had a showing of "Ghost in the Shell" and its sequel, "Innocence." "Ghost in the Shell" may sound like a ghost movie, but it's actually an anime feature length film, an excellent one, by the way, on which the "The Matrix" series is supposed to have been based. After dinner, over my objections, they insisted on watching an old Harry Potter movie instead. "If we watch a horror movie, we won't be able to sleep!" my daughter exclaimed.

Anyway, after the dinner, no one could have been in the mood for scaring. We had Sonya's usual fare of salad with her amazing "secret" dressing, bread and a feast of spreads, plus pasta and a choice of two sauces. In addition, she had brought before us succulent roasted chicken with a creamy wasabi sauce as well as a "hotpot" of fish and tofu with mushrooms. The best surprise of all, though, was dessert. Instead of the usual boiled camote in syrup, what was laid before us on a crystal platter was a buffet of sinful treats: homemade sans rival, slices of rich chocolate cake and apple cobbler. We were fairly bursting at the seams, but the sweet treats washed down with aromatic tarragon tea brought the evening to a most delightful close.

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THE LAST time I had dropped by Sonya's, which was about a month ago, Sonya was on a European sojourn, though she replied to my text queries with alacrity and had even arranged for me and my two friends to enjoy merienda and be taken on a tour of the facilities as she wanted to show off her newest cottage.

Imagine my surprise then when, in the middle of dinner, who should join us at our table but Sonya herself, fresh from Europe and from paying her respects to the dead in Manila earlier that day.

Sonya made for a delightful dinner companion, regaling us with stories from her latest travels: London, Ireland then on to Russia, which her group left on the first day of winter snow. There was time, as well, for trading gossip about Tagaytay and Alfonso (Cavite) affairs, including local politics.

As I was making reservations for her biggest cottage—Lavender—for a family wedding in January, I inquired how well she was doing in the wedding business.

"Oh, we're doing so well!" Sonya shared. "For December alone, I have 14 reservations for wedding receptions, including two on the same day!"

This confirms not only that December is indeed the "wedding-est" month in the Philippines, but also that Tagaytay has become an increasingly popular venue for weddings, with Sonya's being only one of many other possible venues for celebrating amid pleasant weather, a garden setting, and a site sufficiently far from the city to make for an exciting "destination" affair, but near enough for running emergency errands.

As a complimentary service to bridal parties, Sonya and her staff will even fashion bouquets from blooms plucked fresh from her garden and greenhouses. "One bride even decided to throw away her bouquet from Manila when she saw the bouquet we made for her," Sonya confides.

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THE NEXT morning, waking up to sunlight filtering in through frosted glass windows and net curtains, we braved a slight drizzle to make our way to the dining pavilion for breakfast. We were tucked away at the far end of the pavilion, surrounded by trees and bamboo rustling in the wind.

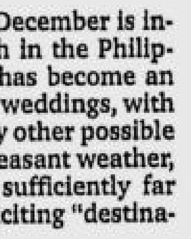
Once again, Sonya managed to surprise and delight us, for aside from the standard breakfast fare of crisp daing na bangus, flavorful adobo and adobo flakes, a delicious herbed cheese omelet and mango-tomato salsa, there were new offerings to tempt our palate. "Heaven!" the usually laconic hubby exclaimed upon taking a bite of the fried white cheese in honey, accompanied by slices of warm toasted bread. Also excellent were the fried potatoes with herbs. "I'm not having lunch anymore!" my son promised as he tucked into his fourth serving of adobo.

After such a rich meal, there was nothing to do but do "nothing," as Sonya admonishes all her guests. "The art of doing nothing" is a finely honed craft at Sonya's, so while I and my children opted to take advantage of the massage and spa facilities—a full body massage, manicure and pedicure for me, foot spas for son and daughter—a list of other activities, from a garden tour to cooking lessons, was offered to the hubby. But he opted instead to practice his saxophone lessons, thankfully without his mouthpiece since the sounds of his saxophone "playing," we pleaded with him, would have broken the hard-won serenity of Sonya's.

We departed Sonya's well past noon, though we were all too full to even notice the passage of time. It had been an all-too-brief Halloween break, but knowing such a place exists was enough to sustain us.

Rizal's burial instructions

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

ONE DOES NOT KNOW WHEN AND HOW IT came to be, but when we visit the cemeteries on Nov. 1 we are actually remembering our departed relatives and friends a day before the date designated by the Roman Catholic calendar. Nov. 1 is the Feast of All Saints and the following day, Nov. 2, is the Feast of All Souls. There seems to be a difference here that we often overlook: the former is for saints, the latter for all the dead, regardless of whether they were saints or sinners.

Whether we go on the correct day or not is beside the point. The fact that we remember the dead, at least once a year, is enough to give us some perspective and the grim realization of where we will all end up someday.

While I relish the company of relatives and the fabulous food that is often served by the graveside in Pampanga, I can't help but wonder about the people who are not remembered, the poor souls who do not have a huge adoring clan to spruce up the grave and exchange stories on Nov. 1. Perhaps the Feast of All Souls was set up so that we can pray for everyone, particularly those who have been forgotten. This year, I felt like bringing flowers to the Rizal monument in Luneta because this happens to be Jose Rizal's grave.

There is something about remembering our own departed friends and relatives that does not seem to translate to the National Hero. It has been suggested, by the superstitious, that one reason our country is in a rut is that we do not remember the Father of the Nation. By tradition, the President does this for us on Dec. 30, but lately the commemoration is held somewhere far from Rizal Park where Rizal's remains lie. The Rizal clan may be large, but since the National Hero died a childless bachelor nobody feels obliged to visit him on Nov. 1 and Dec. 30.

If we are to go by the instructions Rizal left before his death, things were quite simple and straightforward: "Bury me in the ground. Place a stone and a cross over it. My name, the date of my birth, and of my death. Nothing more. If later you wish to surround my grave with a fence, you may do so. No anniversaries. I prefer Paang Bundok."

As you can see, Rizal was true to his other name Laong Laan. This translates into "Ever Prepared" which also happens to be the Boy Scouts' motto.

Needless to say, none of Rizal's instructions was followed. He wanted to be buried in the ground, and that was what happened when they dumped his body in an unmarked grave in Paco Cemetery where he lay from 1896 to 1898, but his remains were exhumed and kept in the Rizal home in Binondo and later transferred to the base of the present Rizal monument.

He wanted to be buried in Paang Bundok, where the Manila North Cemetery now stands. There is a forgotten mausoleum for Rizal's parents there, probably on a lot Rizal himself picked in his lifetime, but he was buried along Roxas Boulevard.

He wanted a simple cross over his grave. Instead we have a statue of him in bronze with a granite obelisk topped with three solid gold stars that was made in Switzerland, which explains why he wears a heavy winter coat in the tropics today.

He specified a simple tombstone with his name, birthday and date of death. He at least got this, but if you go round the monument it is littered with other texts he didn't want.

He left provisions for a fence around the grave, and he now has that. He specifically stated "no anniversaries," but every year on Dec. 30, the President of the Republic of the Philippines leads the nation in mourning and remembrance by raising a flag in front of his grave and placing a wreath on it. Now I add to that and ask that he be remembered on Nov. 1 as well.

Maybe we should give Rizal a break. Perhaps we should follow his instructions, but heck, National Heroes should be seen and not heard.

Some people don't even want to leave him in peace. Some years ago, we received a request to have Rizal's remains exhumed for scientific inquiry. A doctor wanted to conduct an autopsy that required that a hole be drilled into Rizal's skull so that *mongo* seeds could be poured inside. When I asked what this procedure was all about, the reply was that this would give us an idea of the volume of Rizal's cranial vault from which we could hypothesize on why he was so smart. Naturally, I refused and instead offered a photograph of Rizal's skull for study. This used to be one of the best-selling postcards before the war—a gruesome black and white photograph of "Craneo de Rizal" was something you sent to your mother on Mother's Day.

In retrospect, maybe I should have agreed because in his lifetime Dr. Rudolph Virchow of the Berlin Ethnographic Society asked to measure Rizal's skull for anthropometric reasons, but the hero refused. Anyone who watches National Geographic or the Discovery Channel today knows how much forensic doctors can see from human remains, contrary to the old saying that "dead men tell no tales."

From the photograph of Rizal's skull, my dentist concluded that Rizal needed braces. Now, that is a topic for another column or even a learned paper to be delivered to the scientific meeting of the Philippine Dental Association.

All this attention is what Rizal was afraid of and what his unheeded burial instructions sought to contain.

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Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

The undead

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THERE ARE ANTHROPOLOGISTS WHO SPECIALIZE IN studying the dead, or rather, studying how societies treat death and the deceased.

Why this odd interest? Because our beliefs and rituals around the dead actually tell us a lot about our attitudes toward life and about living. Wakes and funerals and visits to the cemeteries are, after all, activities of the living, linked together by death and the dead.

Ghouls and ghosts

Like most other cultures, Filipinos distinguish our world from that of the spirits, the beings Ilokanos call the "not-humans" and Cebuanos, "the not-like-us." We might sometimes apply the English word "ghouls" to some of these spirits, but the term isn't quite right, ghouls generally being malevolent. Our spirits are a mixed lot, sharing our world, sometimes in intimate contact with humans. We are raised with admonitions to be watchful and respectful of them.

Ghosts form a subclass of these spirits and are very important for Filipinos, reflecting our notion that death doesn't mean separation. For us, the dead are no longer alive, but they're not quite dead either. They're the undead, and I use the term without invoking its more sinister connotations.

We presume the dead will hang around for various reasons. Those who die violently linger for years, as we see in the stories around the workers who died while constructing the Manila Film Center. But there will also be ever gentle Lolo coming back because he misses his favorite grandchild. Our social ties extend beyond the grave, although we see that affection as dangerous as well—the dead, well, are dead and contact with the living can cause problems, including illnesses to the child.

'Despedida'

Wakes reflect the vague boundaries between the living and the dead. I'm not sure they should even be called wakes; they're really more of a *despedida*, a farewell party, as the bereaved eat, drink, gamble, poke fun at the dead.

Because of our extended family system, burials can be postponed for days on end as we wait for returning relatives and friends. In the past, this took days because you had to get word out across mountains and rivers, sparking off a pilgrimage of mourners. In this age of the Filipino diaspora, we use the cell phone to call back relatives dispersed in the four corners of the world, "wake talk" now often including relatives explaining the circuitous routes and long travel time it took for them to get in from places like Azerbaijan and Zambia.

Can you imagine solemn grief during this long waiting period? No way. We're not about to allow ourselves, or the dead, to get too bored, so we bring out the guitars and karaoke to celebrate.

Wakes provide a recovery period from death's intrusion while providing a way to re-establish kinship ties. I'm sure many readers have experienced dropping by a wake as a friend and walking out a relative: mourners will reconstruct family trees and eventually, you end up in some branch.

Bring lots of relatives together and there's bound to be tension, but generally the wake provides a temporary ceasefire, wives and mistresses and half-siblings exchanging polite but icy glances. (There are exceptions, certainly. Some time back, tabloids feasted on the scandals around a military man whose Wife No. 1 literally sent in troops to confiscate his corpse and take it away from the mistress' home. Or was it the other way around?)

Then, too, you have the deceased's most virulent enemies trooping in, shamelessly eulogizing their "beloved" friend. One professor, who always hated such hypocritical nonsense, made sure this would not happen by leaving a blacklist of people, including a number of fellow professors, who were not to be allowed at her wake and funeral.

If we seem irreverent about the wake, we do make up with the funeral itself, whose excesses in hysteria match the bacchanalian nature of the wakes. Mind you, though, the funerals aren't all that solemn either. The fiesta continues to some extent, with people chattering away even as the priest or minister prays for the dead.

Eventually though, people remember to mourn, especially as the moment of interment approaches. "Take me with you!" a relative wails as the moment approaches, and grumpy men grunt, "Push her and get it over with."

Lately, I've noticed that with the increasing popularity of cremation, the waiting period for the ashes becomes still another occasion for socializing, although the mood is more subdued, more reverent. This could change though. Already, I've overheard people watching the cremation betting on how long it would be before the widow or widower remarries, with folk wisdom hypothesizing that the more heart-wrenching the mourning and declarations of eternal love, the earlier the remarriage.

Grave matters

After the funeral, we take pains to keep the ties with the undead. There's the 9th day, the 40th day, then with time, the annual visits on the death anniversary and Nov. 1.

If the rituals around the dead tell anthropologists about the living's values, the cities of the dead, too, speak volumes about the situation of the living. Lately, I've noticed how neglected grave sites seem more common and wonder if perhaps the plots belong to families decimated by migration and overseas work.

But the cemeteries are not about to fall silent. A few years back, on a bumpy Cordillera road, I passed by a municipal cemetery with a sign that said, "No Vacancy." Alas, too, the poor suffer more from this demographic crunch. I can never forget attending a funeral a few years ago in a poorer section of the North Cemetery where we literally had to climb up and step over several tombs to get to the tiny plot to bury someone. Bidding my friend farewell, I whispered, "Goodbye, friend. I sure hope you don't have claustrophobia."

Perhaps supreme proof of our lack of boundaries between the living and the dead or undead are the cemeteries' invasion by "informal settlers" (read: squatters) who have built their homes within the cemeteries, raising entire families among the dead.

Lately, too, I am told, some of the cemeteries come alive at night as trysting places for the young. "Why not?" one imaginative student of mine reasoned. "It's quiet and it's cool. The flowers and candles are free, and there's always a place to rest."

All said, our Filipino wakes and funerals are more sensible, more honest in allowing the living to deal with the strange, even contradictory, *halo-halo* (mixture) of emotions we have about death and the dead. Not surprisingly, the wakes and visits to the cemeteries become forums for discussing the day's burning issues, including how the dead are now spared from our politicians. And as we condole with the bereaved, we shake our heads too in pity, because the living will still have to pay the hospital and funeral bills—plus EVAT.

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Saving the nation by resigning

THE INQUIRER'S OCT. 18 EDITORIAL, Titled "Manners," was right on the mark. Could it be that the collapse of civility in our society is an indication also of the progressive breakdown of our society?

Arnold Toynbee, a world-renowned historian, in his work "A Study of History," says that "the nature of the breakdown of civilizations can be summed up in three points: a failure of creative power in the minority, an answering withdrawal of mimesis (imitation) on the part of the majority, and a consequent loss of social unity as a whole."

All three points are now present in our society. The leadership of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President De Castro is utterly lacking in "creative power," having no vision of the future and bereft of any idea on how to cope with the problems of the present, like mass poverty, widespread crime, growing joblessness, rising insurgency, separatism and terrorism. Their only vision is to remain in power.

The majority of our people have lost their respect for, as well as their confidence and trust in, Ms Arroyo and De Castro, as shown by recent polls showing that more than 80 percent of the people want them either to resign, or to be impeached or ousted, while only 19 percent approve of their governance.

Hence, we are witnessing the "consequent loss of social unity as a whole," with thousands of citizens demonstrating daily in the streets, with the police breaking up peaceful assemblies with truncheons and water cannons, with the end of cooperation and the delicate check and balance between the executive and Congress, with citizens losing faith in the administration of justice, and the constituencies at odds with their local executives and representatives in Congress who cynically support a national leadership that is hated and distrusted by the citizens who elected them to office.

Clearly, Ms Arroyo and De Castro can save our civilization from totally collapsing only by resigning.

—MARIA VICTORIA DE BALCE,
18 Fernsville St.,
White Plains, Quezon City

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Answering Question No. 5

FOR AN EDUCATOR, IT IS QUITE disheartening to hear that Mark Benitez is being marked as "academically challenged," because he is such a good basketball player (so I heard). Being an exceptional basketball player needs a different kind of intelligence and discipline oriented toward mind-mapping and strategy-marking.

As a psychology major, I tested a child with problems (definitely not a problem child), using a WISC, an IQ test for children, which involves quite a handful of increasingly difficult questions that even a college student would find hard to answer. Anyway, as per instruction, if a child answers the fifth question correctly, then he gets the full score, including the scores of the first four questions.

In ordinary situations, we start with the fifth question and work our way backward. With the special child I was testing, I started with the second question which she got right; the fourth she failed, but the fifth she answered correctly. So I scored her for the third and fifth numbers only. My mentor, the head psychologist, reminded me that for getting the fifth answer, she should be given automatically a score equivalent to the five numbers. Anyway, the child, who was regarded as "retarded" by three psychologists who had earlier tested her, turned to be a normal but "thoroughly spoiled and unchallenged" child, according to my evaluation.

The lesson here is that if Benitez made good with his first, second and third years of college work, then he does not need to go back to high school. For him to "jump" from third year high school to first year college is a feat but not necessarily extraordinary. If teachers are inspiring and know their jobs well, this could be done without any academic "harm." We have educated children schooled at home because they were so poor, and yet they became honor students and were later offered college scholarship grants by five universities.

What De La Salle can do is ask Benitez to take the PEP test now as a matter of record and formality. If he passes, then he becomes a bona fide third year college student. If he fails, then he goes back to fourth year high school. But then that becomes very funny for anybody—even for the education department—to insist that he takes the PEP test again. After all, he has already answered Question No. 5.

—ARMI J. MARTINEZ,
director,
Sunvalley Montessori
Foundation Inc.

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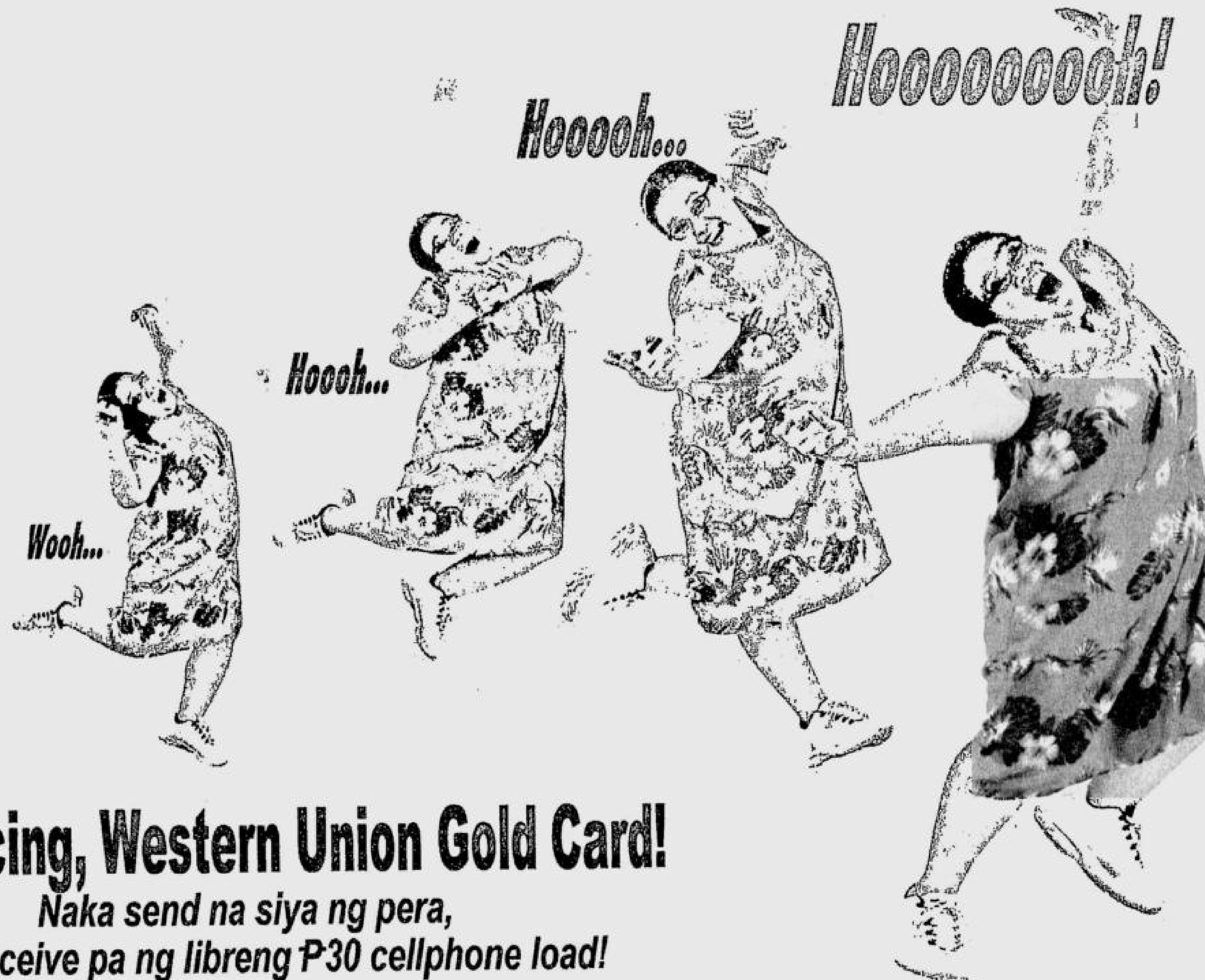
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A Tribute to a True Leader

Former President Corazon C. Aquino will receive the prestigious David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership Award in New York City on November 2, 2005. This award recognizes outstanding individuals who have helped unite various sectors and groups to address poverty and human suffering.

We salute Mrs. Aquino, who embodies the leadership qualities so difficult to find in current times. She has led us through our difficult periods as a nation. She has been with us in our struggles to regain, strengthen, and defend our democracy. Even now, she inspires and guides us in our efforts to seek truth, justice and good governance.

Mrs. Aquino never sought prestige and power. She reluctantly ran for President in the 1986 snap elections only after overwhelming public clamor. In doing so, she helped people find their own voices and stand for their values. Upon assuming the Presidency through a peaceful People Power revolution, she dismantled Marcos' Martial Law apparatus and restored democratic institutions in the country. In the process, she survived seven coup attempts, never resorting to martial or emergency rule. At the end of her term, she turned over the reins of government to her duly-elected successor and quietly returned to her private life.

As a private citizen, Mrs. Aquino continues to inspire and lead by example. She has identified and honored community leaders through her People Power People Movement and supported non-government organizations in their work. She has promoted leadership training for future leaders. And she is now embarking on a new project on microentrepreneurship to economically empower the poor.

The David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership Award affirms what we have known for many years – the integrity and self-sacrifice of Mrs. Aquino. She has shown outstanding moral courage, daring to do what is right no matter how unpopular or risky.

In receiving the Rockefeller Award along with former World Bank President James Wolfensohn, Mrs. Aquino – earlier recognized by Time Magazine as Person of the Year in 1986 – once again brings honor to the country.

In her, we find true leadership. *Mabuhay!*

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INQUIRER *Northern Luzon*

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Rolando B. Fernandez**

Can spirit of the dead haunt killers of Ramos?

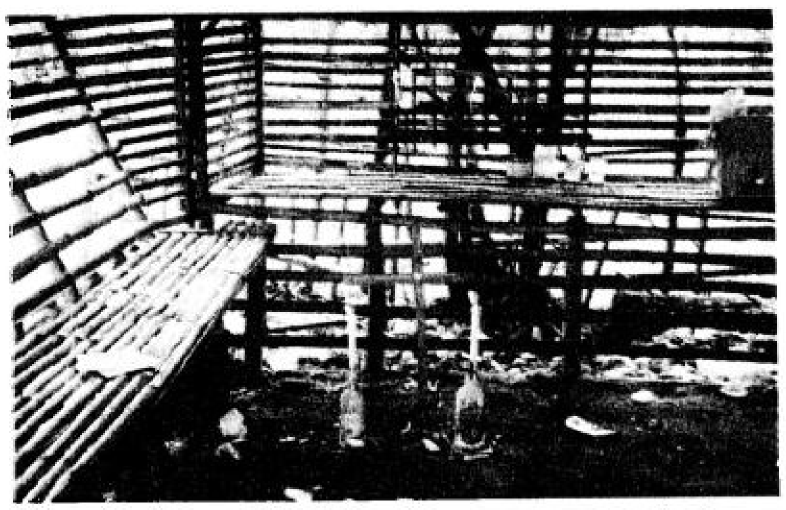
By Jo Martinez-Clemente
Hacienda Luisita, Tarlac City

CANDLES WERE LIT on the spot where Hacienda Luisita labor leader Ricardo Ramos was murdered on Oct. 25 in Barangay Mapalacsiao in Tarlac City. Atop his casket were three chicks.

Among Catholics, lighting candles in such spots and holding prayer vigils and novenas are meant to help the dead as he journeys into the afterlife, lest his spirit ventures and haunts the place.

Placing chicks atop a coffin, on the other hand, is a tradition done among the Ilocanos and Pangasinenses, especially when a man's murderer has yet to be identified. The chicks' pecking, old folks say, hopes to also peck or haunt the conscience of the murderer that he may surrender to authorities.

In contrast to other practices in the Philippines where murder victims are buried with live bullets or sharp weapons to arm them when retribution comes against their murderers, the practice of the pecking chick is more an appeal to the conscience of perpetrators.



TO LIGHT his passage into the afterlife, relatives and friends of Hacienda Luisita labor leader Ricardo Ramos light up candles at the place of his murder.
JO MARTINEZ-CLEMENTE

In a country where justice for the likes of Ramos, president of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (Catlu), is hard to come by, this custom is more than seeking the intervention of unknown spirits, but a graphic symbolism of quest for justice.

Ramos' widow Lily, their three children, and hundreds of farm workers in Hacienda Luisita and village mates in Mapalacsiao, where he served as barangay chair, will bury Ramos in Concepcion town today.

Premonition

Lily said her husband prepared her and their children for his eventual death.

"After [Tarlac City] Councilor Abel Ladera was killed [in March this year], he would always tell us that he was the assassins' next target," she said.

While she did not take these statements lightly, Lily still asked her husband not to joke about it.

But Lily said Ramos would tell her that he was not kidding. He would also tell his children to prepare themselves because he would not always be with them.

"Love each other because you will be left alone when I die and when all of the mourners have left. You'd be all by yourselves," Lily quoted her husband as telling them.

With this regular "mind conditioning" came extra precautions on Ramos' daily chores.

Part of this, Lily said, was for him to avoid going to the city proper at night or not staying at their house during the day. They also set curfew hours to ensure his safety.

On Oct. 24, a day before Ramos was shot and killed, Lily said he joined her in the kitchen while cooking breakfast.

Lily remembered his words very well: "*Kung may mangyari sa akin, hinabilin ko na kayo sa kaibigan ko. Si* [Buenavista barangay chair Eduardo] Serrano [When something happens to me, I asked my friend, Serrano, to look after your welfare]."

A mechanical engineering graduate, Ramos met Lily, who is from Palawan, while he was working for the Puerto Princesa Water District. The couple settled in Tarlac when Ramos joined Central Azucarera de Tarlac in 1991.

IN MEMORIAM

Nana Mining: Ilocos Norte's 'angel of mercy'

By Cristina Arzadon
Laoag City

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER ASSIGNED IN ILOCOS Norte during the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941 once described Doña Manuela Ablan, fondly called Nana Mining, to be an "angel of mercy."

DOÑA Manuela Ablan, 98.

But to most Ilocanos, Nana Mining was Ilocandia's grand lady for having figured prominently in public service, a legacy she continued after her husband, the late Ilocos Norte governor and war hero Roque Ablan Sr., disappeared and believed killed in 1943 at the height of the Japanese Imperial Army's occupation of the province.

Nana Mining died on Oct. 26. She was 98.

Aurora Lopez Ver wrote in "Bumitalag (Miracles of War)" how Nana Mining and her only son, Ilocos Norte Rep. Roque Ablan Jr., spent days hiding from the Japanese in a village called Barrio Awan (then located in the boundary of Calanasan and Naguilian towns in the old Mt. Province) while Governor Ablan was somewhere in the mountains of Solsona town running a government in exile.

Ver recounted how Nana Mining would beg Japanese officers to spare her people from being killed or salvaged each time soldiers found them in their hiding places.

Miraculously, the Japanese would heed Nana Mining's pleas.

Ver, wife of the late freedom fighter Capt. Felino Sacro, based her book on a diary she wrote from 1941 when the war broke out, to its end in 1945. The book was launched in 2002.

'Little Malacañang'

Ablan was said to have organized a guerrilla unit and set up a "Little Malacañang" in Solsona when he refused to surrender to the Japanese. He chose the name after the Malacañang Palace to keep the spirit of the Commonwealth then under President Manuel L. Quezon, accounts said.

Quezon, according to historical accounts, was forced to leave the Palace but conducted government operations through the governors while in exile in the United States.

Bumitalag, a small village between Piddig and Solsona towns, was where Ablan was last seen after being pursued by Japanese soldiers.

Based on the book, then TSgt. John Chernitski of the US Army Signal Corps credited Nana Mining for having saved his life from the hands of the Japanese troops.

Without Nana Mining, Chernitski would not have been able to return to his country. Because of this, the American considered her "an angel of mercy."

Chernitski and another American soldier, Lt. William Snyder, were both assigned to Ablan to monitor messages from Gen. Douglas MacArthur through a radio transmitter they set up in the mountains of Bangui town.

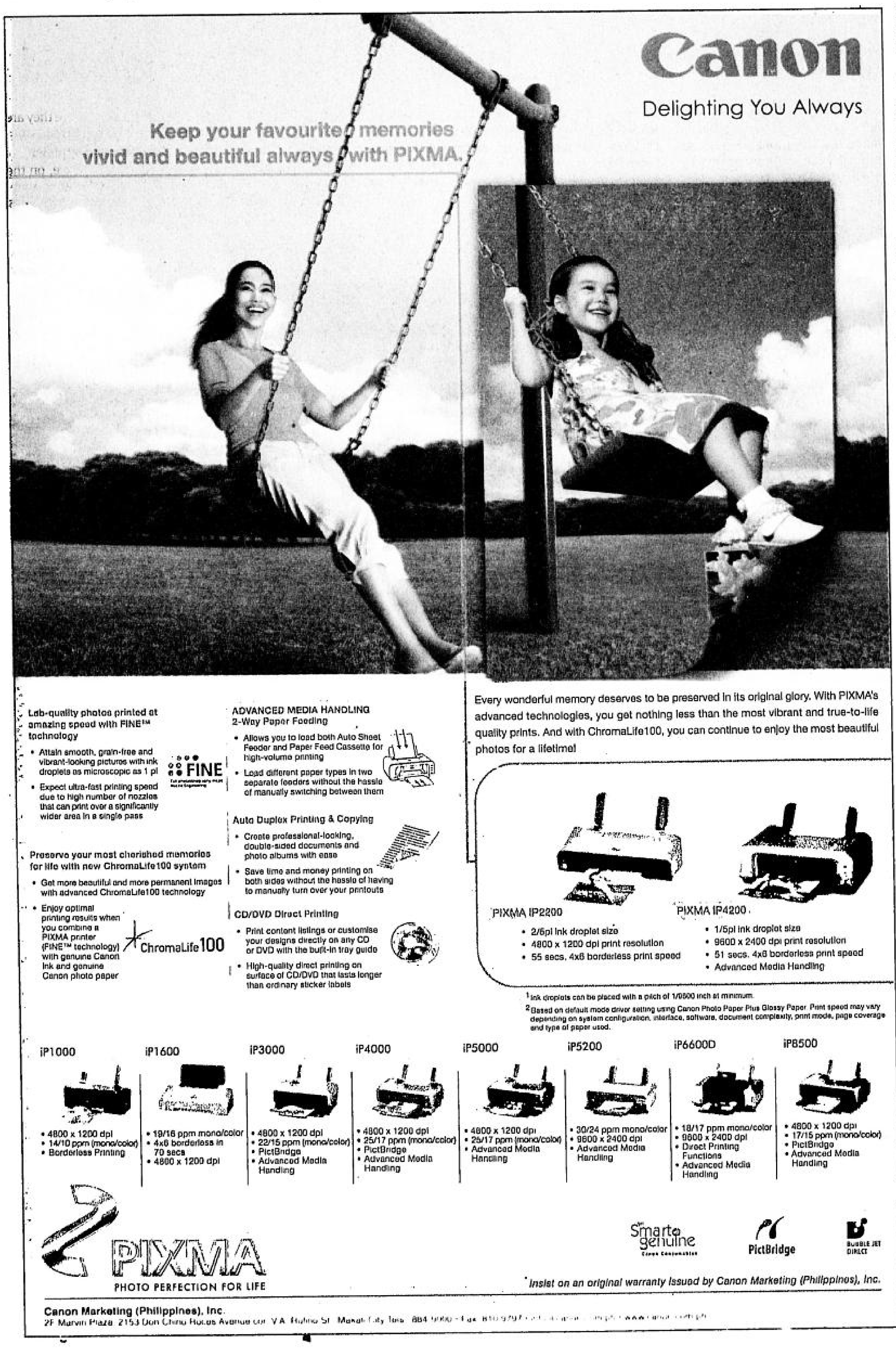
After the liberation from the Japanese in 1945, Nana Mining, an honorary major of the US Armed Forces in the Philippines-North Luzon (USAFIP-NL), worked for the recognition of guerrillas, bolo men and members of the Women Auxillary Service in the rolls of World War II.

She also continued what her husband started since becoming governor in 1937. She headed the Philippine Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, which would be later known as the Price Control Office.

At one point, Nana Mining was head of the Philippine National Red Cross-Ilocos Norte chapter and went to various points in the province.

Before her death, Nana Mining had led Ilocanos in observing Ablan Day every Aug. 9 (also her husband's birth anniversary) in honor of the late war hero's contribution to the Ilocanos' liberation from the Japanese.

To this day, Representative Ablan remembers what his mother taught him: "Give and help those who are in need and never expect anything in return."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Province of Southern Leyte
CITY OF MAASIN
Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The City Government of Maasin through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites all interested suppliers, dealers, distributors and contractors to apply for eligibility and to submit bids for the fabrication and delivery of one (1) unit feedmill mixer and hammermill with an Approved Budget of the Contract of three million pesos, Philippine currency (PhP3,000,000.00).
2. The Bids and Awards Committee will hold a Pre-bid Conference on Thursday, November 3, 2005 at ten o'clock in the morning at the City Conference Room, City Hall, Maasin City.
3. Interested bidders may obtain a complete set of bidding documents from October 25 to November 10, 2005 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of 0.1% of the Approved Budget of the Contract to the City Treasury Services, Maasin City.
4. Deadline for the submission of bids shall be on Tuesday, November 15, 2005 at ten o'clock in the morning at the City Conference Room, City Hall, Maasin city. Immediately after the deadline, bids will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives.
5. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use the non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted. All particulars relative to the Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, evaluation of bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
6. The City Government of Maasin assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate and indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of bid. The Bids and Awards Committee of the city of Maasin reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the government.
7. For more information, please contact the BAC Secretariat at telephone numbers 570-8608 or 570-8824.

(Sgd.) CRISPIN M. ARONG, JR.
Chairman

(PDI Oct 26 & Nov 2 2005)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2005 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER A17

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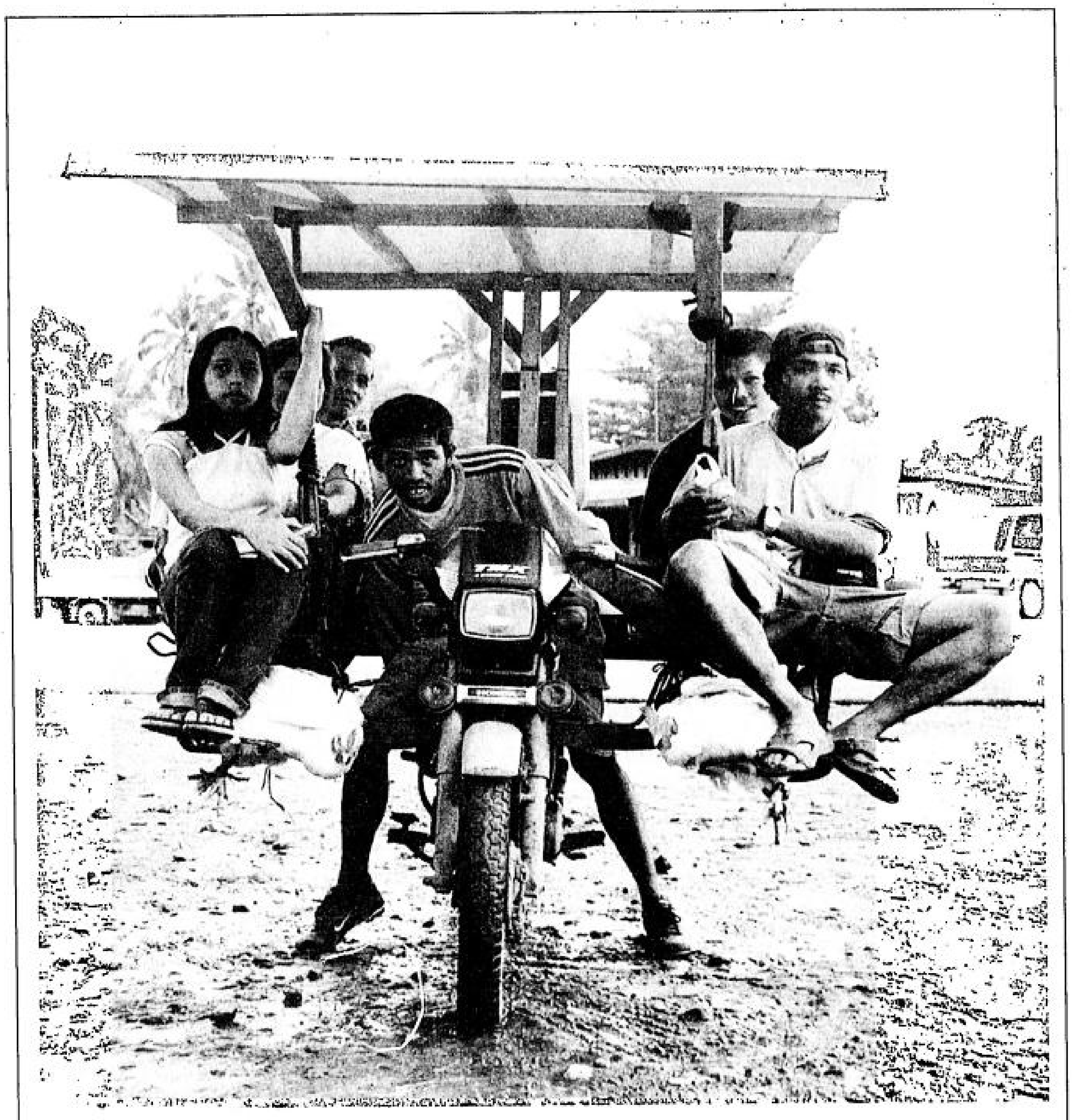


READY TO FLY
An improvised mode of transportation called "habal-habal," lords over the street of Monkayo, Compostela Valley. This driver does a balancing act with his unique vehicle during a stopover to refill his gas tank. DENNIS JAY SANTOS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Cebu archbishop calls for prayer to stop bird flu

By Christian V. Esguerra

CEBU ARCHBISHOP RICARDO Cardinal Vidal is asking the faithful to seek divine intervention to prevent the deadly bird flu virus that has killed at least 62 people in Asia from arriving in the country.

Vidal is organizing a series of dawn rosaries that are expected to gather a huge number of Catholics under his archdiocese to keep the country safe from the contagious disease.

The Department of Health earlier warned it was only a matter of time before avian influenza, particularly its deadly H5N1 strain, arrived because of the regular migration of birds to the Philippines during the cold period from October to February.

"Let's all make a prayer rally for this," Vidal told reporters in an interview. "Let us all pray that (bird flu) won't land in our country."

Dawn rosaries are common in Cebu and in the neighboring province of Leyte, especially in times of crisis. The cardinal said these were once done when the province faced a serious problem with dengue.

For bird flu, he said he would also celebrate novena Masses among the people of Cebu.

Both dawn rosaries and the Eucharistic celebrations seeking God's shield from the virus would be held "as long as there is a need," he said.

Vidal was particularly concerned, saying that Cebu has places attractive to migratory birds.

Health officials warned that the Philippines would soon face actual bird flu cases because of birds migrating from countries like China and Mongolia. The fear is that some of these birds would infect local poultry and livestock.

Worse, the World Health Organization warned that the time was ripe for a pandemic ostensibly coming from bird flu. The WHO was wary of a new strain that could pass from one person to another.

So far, humans can acquire the disease only through close contact with an infected fowl particularly its droplets. The virus has crossed from Asia to Europe, particularly Romania and Greece.

Amid the global alert, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III warned against a "pandemic of misinformation" that would only trigger panic and waste money.

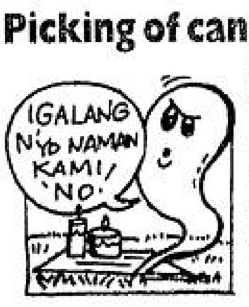
The problem, resulting from inaccurate and exaggerated media reporting, would cost countries amounts bigger than what should actually be spent in case of a bird flu pandemic, he said.

"While we prepare for the actual pandemic, we should also be careful about a pandemic of misinformation," he told the INQUIRER.

During the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003, he said Southeast Asia alone spent $40 billion to contain the disease.

ROUNDUP

Picking of candles banned


IGALANG N'YO NAMAN KAMI, 'NO!

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The chief of the Calabarzon police yesterday warned buyers and sellers of "second hand" candles that they would be arrested if police found them transacting business inside cemeteries. Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa said police have informed units stationed in cemeteries that buying and selling of used candles inside the memorial parks were unlawful. He said the mere presence of traders and buyers of candles made from used ones encourages young boys to steal candles in tombs. "If warranted, arrest persons involved and file corresponding charges," Verzosa said in a memorandum. He said arrested persons face charges of violating the antifencing law. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Floods soak Laguna towns

SINILOAN, Laguna—Low-lying areas of five Laguna towns were still under water as of yesterday afternoon and strong morning rains brought alarm among residents who expressed fears their visit to cemeteries would be aborted. Parishioners expressed fears there would be no Mass in a bay area parish cemetery because of the rains. Mabitac, Siniloan, Sta. Maria, Famy and Pangil towns were flooded. Rice fields in Mabitac, Sta. Maria, Siniloan, Pangil and Famy were also submerged in floodwaters. Frank Tibay, Mabitac municipal administrator, said the unharvested rice could rot in the floodwater. An elderly woman and a girl were rescued after they fell in a canal in Siniloan at the height of the rains. *Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

3 gang men held at checkpoint

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A suspected leader of a robbery gang known as Paracale, who had just been released from prison a month ago, and his two gangmates were arrested in a police checkpoint in Calauan, Laguna early Tuesday shortly after robbing a Lucena City-bound passenger van. Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa, Calabarzon police director, identified the suspects as alleged gang leader Claudio Quintela, 55; Dindo Piodena, 31; and Gerry Guerra, 34. Recovered from them were two .38-cal. revolvers, a fan knife and the personal belongings of their victims. A few hours before the arrest, police received a report that passengers of a van bound for Lucena City from Alabang, Muntinlupa were dumped along a dirt road in Barangay Bitukang Manok in Atimonan, Quezon after several armed men held them up. Verzosa said the suspects commandeered the van and fled to Laguna. Checkpoints were set up to intercept the suspects. Senior Supt. Federico Terte, Laguna police director, said during the interrogation, the suspects admitted they were responsible for two other robberies involving vans in Rizal and Cavite provinces. Terte had just served a 10-year jail term for robbery with murder.

Clan members hunted for cop's slay

COTABATO CITY—Marines and policemen in Lanao del Sur launched a provincewide manhunt against members of two Maranao families believed to be behind the ambush and killing of a town police chief and eight others on Monday. Chief Supt. Akmad Mamalinta, police chief in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said a "*rido*" (family feud) triggered the 3 p.m. ambush in Barangay Mabel, Malabang town that killed SPO4 Corals Tambugao, police chief of Tubaran town, also in Lanao del Sur, and eight of his children and relatives (not policemen as earlier reported). Insp. Diba Ibrahim, Malabang police chief, said Marines and policemen are scouring the mountains of Malabang looking for members of the Macugar and Biat clans. Soldiers from the Army's 603rd Infantry Brigade have put up road blocks along portions of Cotabato-Marawi national highway. *Edwin O. Fernandez with reports from Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Longer holiday in ARMM

COTABATO CITY—The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) will enjoy longer holidays ahead with the local declaration of Nov. 3 as a nonworking day marking the end of Ramadan. Through Executive Order 4, ARMM Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan has officially declared Thursday a nonworking holiday in the region in the observance of Eid'l Fit'r, the end of the monthlong fast and sacrifice among Muslims. Earlier, President Macapagal-Arroyo proclaimed Oct. 31 and Nov. 4 as nonworking holidays to provide Christians enough time to be with their relatives to celebrate the feast of the dead. While non-Muslims resume their days off on Friday, the 2.8 million residents of Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao and Marawi City will start rejoicing on Thursday after Ramadan. Ampatuan enjoins the faithful to participate in the early morning congregational prayer on Nov. 3 as he offered the use of the tightly secured Office of the Regional Governor compound at the ARMM Complex as its venue *Charlie C. Señaso, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Talks for release of major held by NPA rejected

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—AN Army general has rejected the demand of the National Democratic Front to cease military operations in Central Luzon as a condition for the release of Air Force Maj. Nepture Elequin, a captive by the New People's Army since July 2.

"We will not stop our anti-insurgency campaign. There shall be no pullout of troops," said Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr., commanding general of the Army's 7th Infantry Division that operates in seven Central Luzon provinces as well as portions of Pangasinan and Cagayan Valley.

What the division would only do, he said, was to "provide safety passage" to Elequin, 50, in the event he was freed in any of the areas where the military operates.

The INQUIRER interviewed him on Monday as he presented here two of the soldiers suspected of killing Hacienda Luisita labor leader Ricardo Ramos last Oct. 25.

Maj. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, chief of the military's Northern Luzon Command, also rejected anew calls for a regional ceasefire in Northern and Central Luzon.

"The NDF is seeking a cessation of hostilities in areas where they are losing. There is no rest in their campaign," Tolentino said by phone.

The Philippine Air Force, on the other hand, has firmly taken a no-negotiation stance, said its spokesperson, Col. Restituto Padilla, quoting an order from Air Force commander, Lt. Gen. Jose Reyes. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

'Coffin capital' of Central Luzon dying

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SANTO TOMAS, PAMPANGA—THIS TOWN, the "coffin capital" of Central Luzon, literally thrives on death.

But the town's coffin-making industry has been on the throes of death in the last 14 years, warding off the last nail to seal its demise, local entrepreneurs and a pioneer in the industry said.

The industry has grown so much with nearly 200 enterprises as of 2004, according to Mayor Lucas Arceo, whose family is also into casket making.

At least 23 establishments are registered with the Department of Trade and Industry while the rest operate through local licenses.

DTI records showed that the registered establishments employ three to 15 workers who are all working manually and with very little help from modern machines.

Their capital ranges from P50,000 to P1.2 million.

The industry's growth, Arceo said, has made the competition fiercer.

While that development was manageable, the ventures of younger generation of Santo Tomas craftsmen in various parts of the country, like Cebu and the Ilocos, have shrunk the market outside Central Luzon.

That exodus, several coffin makers said, was driven by Mt. Pinatubo's eruptions in 1991 and the lahar rampage until 1997 in this coastal town.

They said the international market also remained untapped because export standards were hard to meet.

High production cost

They have not been also able to penetrate the high-end market, a segment captured by Metro Manila-based funeral parlors that import quality coffins.

Production-wise, the prices of materials like wood, paint and thinner have doubled, leaving little profit to use for expansion or for acquisition of cost-efficient technology.

Wood now sells P30 for every board feet and has been scarcer since the logging ban was imposed following the killer flashfloods and landslides in late 2004 in Aurora and Quezon.

The Arceo family has branched out into funeral services to sustain the original venture of coffin making.

Others cope by maintaining their clients among funeral parlors all over the region.

The terms, however, are more difficult now. Before Mt. Pinatubo erupted, the mode was cash-on-delivery basis. But in the past several years, it has been on a pay later or worse, "pay when able" scheme, coffin makers said.

PAMPANGA'S coffin-making industry is experiencing its own mortality, struggling to survive competition, a shrinking market and high production costs. TONETTE OREJAS/PDI CENTRAL LUZON

Nadinne Arceo, the mayor's wife and who handles the entire enterprise for the family, said the Santo Tomas coffin industry needs a lot of help before it hits the grave.

Pampanga Rep. Anna York Bondoc said there are plans to resuscitate it.

Consultations with stakeholders started rather late. A workshop seeking to identify and adopt strategies in production and marketing is set before the year ends.

Arceo's father, Florencio, 78, wished that Bondoc would help see the industry through the hard times.

"*Mayna na talaga* (The business has been sluggish)," Florencio said, citing what he considered a low output of between 30 and 50 pieces monthly from each of the enterprises in the town.

Business, he recalled, was very good in the 1960s when only he and an earlier pioneer, Aquilino Tayag of the House of Woodcraft, ruled the trade.

Better days

"*Anggang makatakot yang negosyu, pibabatan mi ya uling masanting nemang kapanintunan* (Although it was a scary business, I persisted because my wife and I derived good income from it)," Florencio said.

His wife, 79-year-old Egmidia, handled the business side.

Florencio, on the other hand, single-handedly manufactured every piece, treating his work like a craft.

Proof of the business' profitability and the couple's hard work? Their borrowed P500 capital flourished, enabling them to buy a few parcels of land, send their eight children to college and lend them the capital to embark on their own casket businesses.

The couple built three apartment units that they rent out to support their monthly expenses on their retirement.

Florencio felt also partly responsible for the proliferation of the business. His leap from being a carpenter to Tayag's *maestro de obra* (head craftsman) and finally, his going on his own in 1970, showed to others that they, too, could make it in the trade.

Old folks in the town believed the industry was an offshoot of the woodcarving business in Betis (now a village of Guagua town), an old Pampanga town west of Santo Tomas. Rich with loam-type of soil, Santo Tomas is also famous for its ceramics.

The metal craft used in casket making is also used in the manufacture of cars and jeeps fitted with used engines from Japan.

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JOAN BONDOC

IN GOOD COMPANY
FEELING quite at home, this woman spends the night with her loved one at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.

No OBR on Sundays?

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA DEVELOPMENT Authority (MMDA) is considering the suspension of the Organized Bus Route (OBR) scheme on Sundays.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center executive director Angelito Vergel de Dios pointed out that Sunday was a slow day for commuter traffic in Metro Manila.

"Bus operators shall decide how many buses to dispatch on this day. They would not want to field many buses, and have no income," said the traffic chief, in an interview Monday.

The MMDA suspends the number coding scheme for motor vehicles on weekends, when Metro roads are usually less congested.

The number coding scheme keeps some vehicles off the road on certain days of the week depending on the last digit of their license plates.

Implemented two weeks ago for bus routes traversing Edsa, the OBR placed all Metro buses under a system of controlled dispatch, depending on the number of commuters on the road at a given time.

The scheme, conceived in 2003, aimed to ease traffic flow on Edsa by reducing bottlenecks like long queues of buses and competition for passengers.

The MMDA noted that since there were too many of them, buses made trips barely half-filled.

By reducing the number of buses on the street and maximizing passenger load per trip, the OBR was expected to result in savings and more income for bus operators.

On Sundays, Vergel de Dios said bus operators themselves already reduced the number of buses being dispatched, apparently realizing there were fewer commuters.

The implementation of the OBR was suspended on the first Sunday of its implementation.

The scheme was also suspended from last Sunday until yesterday on account of the long weekend as the nation marked All Saints' Day.

Vergel de Dios said MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando wanted the OBR suspension on Sundays.

"At least, our men could also take a rest," he added.

The MMDA fielded dispatchers and other personnel at OBR route endpoint terminals like Alabang, Baclaran, FTI (Food Terminal Inc.), Navotas and Fairview, as well as seven other control points near end destinations.

OBR queue cards that controlled the dispatch of buses were issued and collected in those places.

MMDA personnel made sure that buses queued properly in terminals and the first on, first off policy was followed.

'Tiangge' goes to cemetery

By Tina G. Santos and Jocelyn R. Uy

FILIPINO ENTREPRENEURS APpeared to have enjoyed brisk sales as the nation marked All Saints' Day yesterday.

Vendors at the entrances of the Manila North Cemetery did not only sell the usual sandwiches, fruit juices, sodas, fishball, and candies, but also glassware, clothes, toys, even power tools.

At the La Loma Cemetery, food chains had stalls and also people going around promoting their products.

Some entrepreneurs set up food stalls in front of their family mausoleums.

"This is one occasion we always look forward to because we really earn more," said Norby Baldero, 39, a fishball vendor at the Chinese Cemetery.

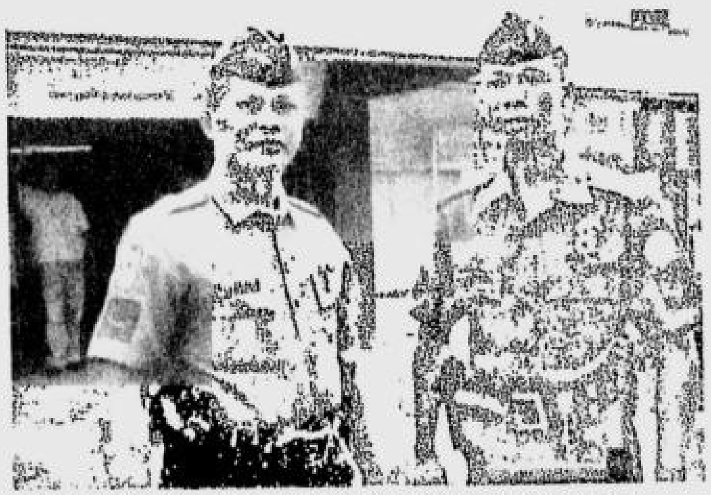
For the third year in a row, Mercy Muñoz, 38, a dentist, sold floral arrangements. Pablo Tengco, 42, and his nephew Tony, 19, rushed the renovation of a tomb at the Manila North Cemetery yesterday, which he promised to have ready by today.

Noah and his friends swept and cleaned the cemetery grounds for P250 a day. But Canuto Tulalian, 45, and his brothers, repainted the tomb of their parents themselves. It was cheaper, he said.

For Teresita Flores, 51, yesterday was not only a time to visit her sister's grave but also to make a little extra money.

For four years now, she has been selling homecooked or *lutong bahay* meals, like the crowd favorite *menudo*, inside the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City.

This Christmas, make a wish and watch it come true.
A MOST MAGICAL TIME OF THE YEAR
Rustan's



IBRAHIM (left) and Calibuso: Just being true to their jobs.

Tribute to Navotas cops

PO1 JOE CALIBUSO AND PO1 Guiama Ibrahim of the Navotas Police Station are the town's "little big heroes." The two have received several citations from government and private organizations for turning over P1 million stolen by robbers to its rightful owners and catching the suspects.

Unilever Philippines was the latest company that recognized the efforts of the two in preventing a robbery at the Navotas Fish Port Complex recently.

Ibrahim and Calibuso, with duty guard Angelo Ocana and barangay watchman Charlito Plaza, were honored by Unilever at the Philippine National Police headquarters in Camp Crame where the two policemen also received the Medalya ng Kagalingan.

"We salute these men for exemplifying integrity at work," said Chito Macapagal, Unilever Philippines general manager for corporate development, adding that the two were "perfect examples" to learn from, and who reinforced Unilever's drive to restore pride in being Filipino.

All set for Parañaque fiesta

A MONTH-LONG FIESTA HAS been scheduled in Parañaque City to highlight the major accomplishments of the city government this year.

Among the activities lined up are the Tatak Parañaque-Gawang Parañaque exhibit at SM Bicutan on Nov. 4-6, and at SM Sucat on Nov. 11-13. Novena masses are scheduled on Nov. 23 and 24 while song/prayer contests and painting exhibits will be held from Nov. 23-29. For music lovers, the country's top balladeers like Rico J. Puno, Hadji Alejandro, Rey Valera, Marco Sison and Nonoy Zuniga will serenade residents in a free concert on Nov. 26 at SM Sucat. On Nov. 29, a procession in the streets of Parañaque will be the highlight of the day. To cap off the festivities, a Mass, the traditional Sunduan, dinner parties and a fireworks display will be the main attractions on Nov. 30.

Among the accomplishments under the term of Mayor Florencio Bernabe are the introduction of an efficient garbage collection system, new streetlights and major road improvements, the construction of two new elementary and high schools, and the renovation of City Hall, including the launching of a Taxpayers' Lounge within its premises.

SPORTS TV Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA – Nuggets vs Spurs; 9 a.m. (r-4:30 p.m.); Mavs vs Suns; 11:30 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports – The NBA regular season begins with a double-header.
TENNIS: BNP Paribas Masters; 11 p.m.; STAR Sports.

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

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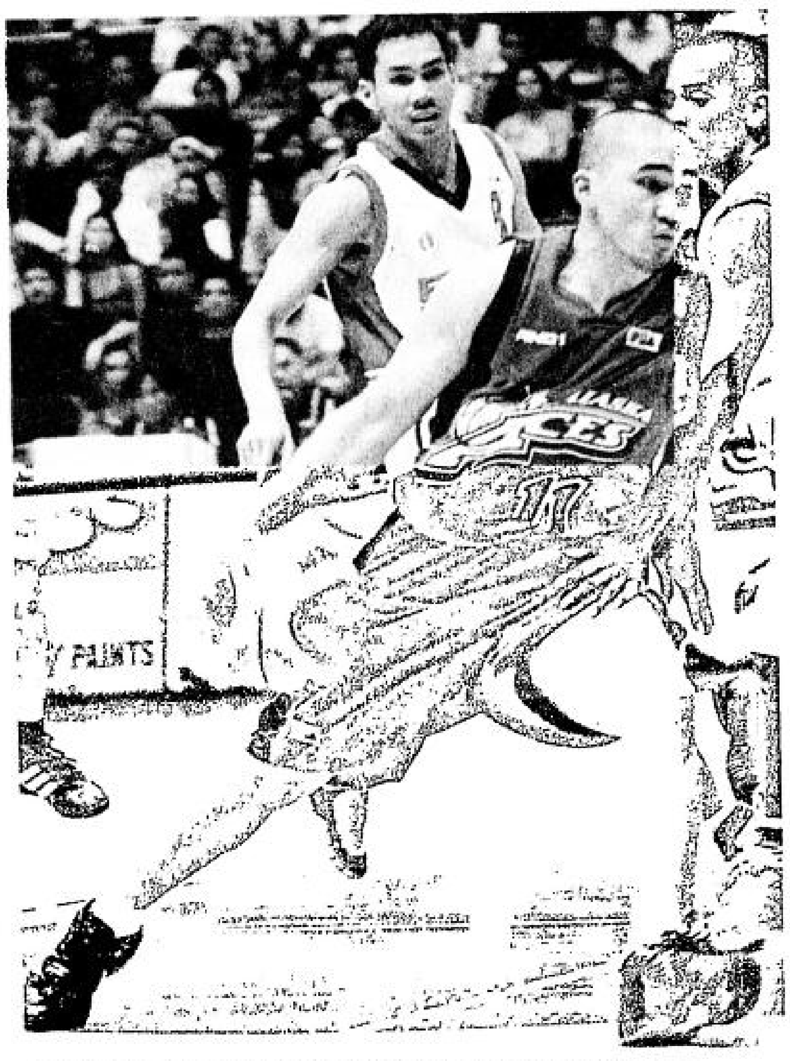
Alaska tests 'new' Red Bull



ALASKA starting guard Mike Cortez is expected to be in top condition for his team's rematch with Red Bull. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

RED BULL WAS NEVER A contender in pre-season forecasts. Six games into the conference, the Barako are now the favorites.

"They (Barako) used to be the dark horses but with the way they have been winning games, they're now the favorites," said Alaska coach Tim Cone.

Cone and the Aces, who were among the top favorites on paper, try out the energized Red Bull squad for size when the two teams clash today in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference at the Cuneta Astrodome.

After whipping Sta. Lucia Realty a week ago, the Barako have found the perfect offensive chemistry among Quemont Greer and Red Bull locals.

Greer's trigger-happy ways have found a perfect complement in the offensive awakening of starters Lordy Tugade, Rico Villanueva, Junthy Valenzuela and Warren Ybañez.

Adding to that edge is the fact that Cyrus Baguio, Mick Pennisi, Topex Robinson and rookies Leo Najorda, Larry Fonacier and Paolo Bugia have pitched in their share of the offensive load.

"Our mentality before was to go to Q because of his scoring ability," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao. "We just reversed that line of thinking and got everybody involved."

Red Bull's new philosophy should concern the Aces. Before the Red Bull offense struck a harmonious balance between import and locals, the Barako already managed to trip the Aces, 76-75, in their first meeting three weeks ago.

Since then, Red Bull has only lost once in five games, tying the Aces at 4-2.

"It's going to be a great match-up and we want to get back at them," said Cone.

Mike Cortez, who suffered an MCL on his right knee, got a much-needed rest during the Halloween break while Tee McClary is again expected to be in tip-top form after recovering from a sprained ankle.

"It will be an emotional rematch, highlighted by [the memory of that] spectacular dunk by Q," said Guiao, recalling Greer's final basket, which was as spectacular as it was decisive.

With seconds to go in the game, Greer shook defender Don Allado off with an ankle-twisting crossover and then levitated for a tomahawk jam over McClary to help ice the final count.

In the other game, Barangay Ginebra faces San Miguel Beer hoping to keep up with its streak after inflicting Talk 'N Text's first defeat in five games and winning a rematch against Sta. Lucia Realty.

San Miguel coach Jong Uichico said import Rico Hill would still suit up for the Beermen following his heroics last time out. Hill led the Beermen (1-4) to a double-overtime victory against Air21 that finally pulled them out of a winless rut.

The Kings (4-3) will have Jayjay Helterbrand back into their fold after missing the Sta. Lucia rematch due to a strained hamstring. *June Navarro*

STANDINGS	W	L
Talk 'N Text	5	1
Purefoods	5	2
Red Bull	4	2
Alaska	4	2
Brgy. Ginebra	4	3
Air21	2	4
Sta. Lucia	2	5
San Miguel	1	4
Coca-Cola	1	5

GAMES TODAY
(*Cuneta Astrodome*)
4:40 p.m.—Alaska vs Red Bull
7:25 p.m.—San Miguel vs Brgy. Ginebra

Sepak teams eye gold rush

THE RP SEPAK TAKRAW TEAMS FEEL THEY can win four of the six gold medals to be staked in their events in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games.

Philippine Amateur Sepak Takraw Association president Mario Tanchangco said the Filipino bets are out to surpass the lone bronze medal they won in the Vietnam SEA Games two years ago.

Sepak takraw, a popular sport this side of the world, will be held in Cebu with traditional regional powerhouses Thailand, Malaysia and Myanmar out to spoil the Philippines' aspirations.

The RP sepak teams are seeing action in all six events—men and women's hoop, men and women's regu and men and women's double regu.

***

THE Basketball Association of the Philippines will take the basketball crisis to the court of law by filing a complaint against the leaders of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

According to a statement sent to media offices yesterday, BAP vice president Christian Tan and deputy secretary general Angelito Alvarez will file a complaint in a Manila Regional Trial Court today against POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, chair Robert Aventajado and secretary general Steve Hontiveros.

The expelled cage body hopes to get a favorable response from the court to be able to force the POC to re-affiliate the BAP into the local Olympic movement and possibly hold the basketball tournament in the coming Southeast Asian Games.

Basketball is all but scrapped in this year's edition of the Games, which the country will host from Nov. 27 to Dec. 5, after the international federation stood firm in suspending the Philippines from hosting and taking part in any international meet it is sanctioning. *Musong R. Castillo*

25 days to go

Basta Pinoy. Posible.

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Tierro claims Olivarez Cup

PATRICK JOHN TIERRO TURNED BACK FELlow Davis Cup veteran Johnny Arcilla, 7-5, 6-4, recently, in the men's singles finals of the Olivarez Open Tennis Championships in Parañaque.

"This win is a good preparation for the coming Subic Bay Tennis Invitationals," said Tierro, who pocketed P25,000 in the Philta-sanctioned event.

It was a fitting finale to the event with Tierro, the country's top-ranked netter, winning out against the former RP No. 1 as they both gear up to represent the Philippines in the coming 23rd Southeast Asian Games.

Tierro teamed up with Subic Bay's Beeyong Sison but lost the men's doubles finals to Arcilla and Adelo Abadia.

In women's singles of the tournament sponsored by former Parañaque Mayor Pablo Olivarez, Cebuana Lhuillier and Dunlop, Bien Zoleta emerged triumphant with a 3-6, 6-2 (ret.) win over Melissa Orteza.

Tierro will have Fil-Americans Cecil Mamiit and Eric Taino as teammates in the Philippine SEAG team. *Dennis Eroa, Libre sports editor*

WHAT'S INSIDE

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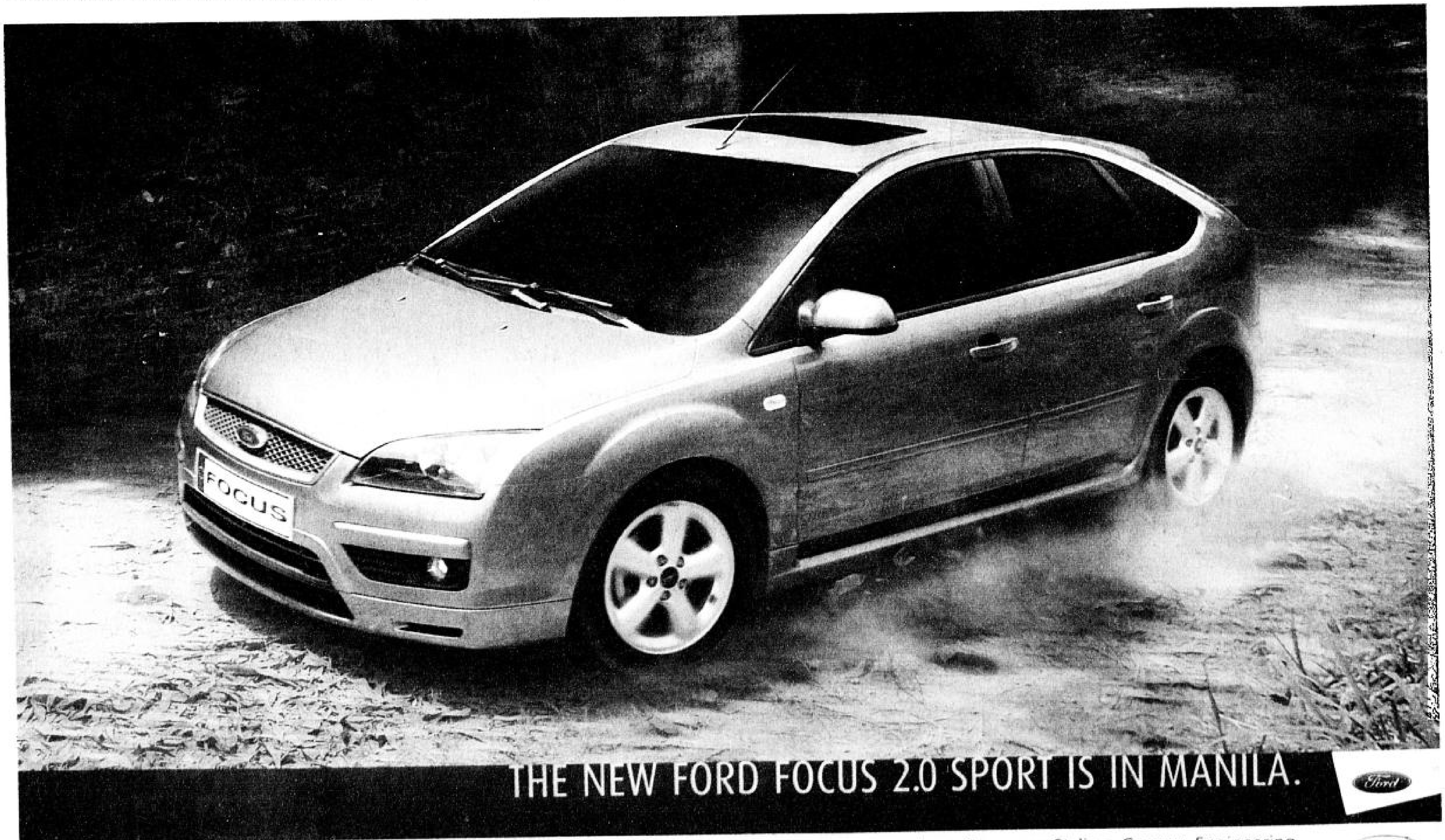
- Harbour Centre harbors bigger dreams /A20
- Makybe Diva triumphs in Melbourne Cup /A21



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Abangan ang announcement ng mga sinwerte sa Grand Draw!

GEN-U-WIN JACKPOT

PETRON

Promo ended October 15, 2005. See leaflets for details. Per DTI NCR Permit #2445 Series of 2005. For Metro Manila deliveries [illegible]

ADIDAS U-19

Davao holds off Iloilo for crown

BAGO CITY—DAVAO HACKED OUT A 1-0 triumph over Team JPV Biscocho House-Iloilo behind a virtuouso performance from Glen Balaquina on Monday to win its second straight PFF-Adidas U-19 National Youth championship before a big crowd at the Manuel Torres Sports Center here.

The 18-year-old Balaquina stood out on both ends for the Davaoeños, striking the game's only goal in the 40th minute when he pounced on a mad scramble in front of the goal after Iloilo failed to clear the brilliant free kick from the left flank by Davao team captain Renor Negro.

More importantly, Balaquina, who was later named the tournament MVP and best defender, held the Davao defense together, which held its ground in the face of a relentless attacking game by the Ilonggos in the final 10 minutes.

"I'm just happy that my teammates did not give up. We showed a lot of heart and character in winning this match," Balaquina said.

After scoring what proved to be the marginal goal, Davao settled down defensively as Iloilo dominated play in the middle of the field.

"We played good defense to win this one," Davao coach Ramonito Carreon said.

When Iloilo turned its attack up a notch in the waning minutes, Balaquina anchored the Davao defense, which became a virtual wall, to foil the Ilonggos' bid.

"He (Balaquina) really played well today. He deserves to be MVP," said Carreon, whose side went into the finals with a 4-0 record.

Earlier, Negros salvaged third place with a 4-2 win over NCR.

First Philip
Media

MEDIA SMASH
Former first lady and Philippine Badminton Association head Amelita Ramos (second from right), Media Sports Club president Edith Angeles (left), Wally Panganiban (right) of Powerade/Coca Cola and the McDonald's mascot grace the opening of the 1st Philippine Media Badminton open "Hataw sa Kalusugan" tournament. Among the tournament's sponsors is the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Pasay hosts 'Fastest Win'

THE FASTEST Win One-Cock Ulutan at the Pasay City Cockpit starts today at 10 a.m. At stake is a guaranteed prize of P150,000 with an entry fee of only P1,100. According to pit manager Eric dela Rosa, the event will be staged regularly every Wednesday. The event is backed by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Meanwhile, the CAP Grand Championship 5-stag derby kicks off Friday. For details, call 8431890, 8431746 and 8166750.

From pitiful to pathetic

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

SO WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU were caught in La Salle's dilemma?

Simple. You would do something firm, distinguished, honorable.

The school was caught in a no-win situation.

It itself had admitted having fielded at least two ineligible players in the varsity basketball circuit.

La Salle held judgment and announced it was conducting its own probe.

Fine. There was the hope La Salle could salvage the situation.

But after it came out with a cross-eyed result of its own probe, La Salle lost what little hope was left of it resolving its self-inflicted woes with dignity.

What it had to offer the doubting public was miserably inadequate.

That shallow probe, whose results were being issued on installment, tended to show La Salle was trying to hide something.

***

Or was it protecting someone at the expense of the institution?

Suddenly, there appeared a basis for the decision makers of the school to be called hypocrites, as one alumnus, Servillano de la Cruz, had shouted during the La Salle press conference last week.

La Salle had committed a grievous fault, but it showed very little remorse with its shallow moves.

It was easy to suspect La Salle had come up with a campus solution to what's actually a national sporting mess.

But that basketball anomaly, mind you, was not just campus dirt that could be swept away with sissy solutions.

While we had even offered prayers for the school for it to recover its lost peace, the situation for La Salle has degenerated from pitiful to pathetic.

So what would you do if you were caught in La Salle's dilemma?

Simple. You won't do what La Salle had done.

***

With this, we borrow excerpts from a speech to be delivered by a friend on campus journalism:

"Campus journalism is often rated as an inferior field, you know, like a terribly underage kid squeezed into Grade One, a *saling-pusa*. Small and insignificant. Or, to put it brutally, sophomoric.

"But that's because those who continue to belittle campus press continue to believe campus journalism happens only inside a school campus. But we can't finish, repeat: we cannot finish, this chore properly if we continue to subscribe to this wrong notion: that campus journalism evolves, or happens only inside a school campus.

"To tell you the truth, Campus Journalism is bigger, greater than generally thought of. This honest calling, at its purest, doesn't happen only inside a school campus. It could happen anywhere, where golden truth is waiting to be told, where lies and anomalies are waiting to be exposed.

"For example: isn't the newborn child making a report the moment he cries after emerging from the womb?

"When a child cries his first cry, isn't he clearly and honestly telling the whole world that he has come, he has arrived?

"What reporting could be purer than that? And nothing could be truer.

"The message here is: If you train early enough to be a responsible, dedicated, incorruptible journalist, then there's a great chance of you succeeding in the very demanding field of journalism.

"But then, we must also first determine what's a successful journalist. Is he the one who amass millions, builds a mansion, puts up a fleet of cars?

"If you think success in journalism is measured by the journalist's bank book, then we're not seeing eye to eye. This is not to say that you cannot earn a living through journalism.

"It's indeed a profession, a job that pays.

"But, as a true journalist, it goes without saying that, more than earning power, it's integrity that you should wield and treasure as the golden anchor of your calling.

"You don't enter the profession in order to become rich.

"You do journalism to make the world a better place to live in.

"You strive to enrich the lives of others."

Harbour Centre harbors bigger dreams

HARBOUR Centre owner Mikee Romero hopes celebrations like this will soon find its way to the professional league.

AWAY FROM THE GLARE OF THE LIMELIGHT, a rising basketball brand is dominating small-time tournaments with its sights fixed on a big-time dream.

The trophies Harbour Centre recently collected may not be enough to have PBA board members knocking on its door with application forms in hand, but it is enough to convince its owner, former collegiate gunner Mikee Romero, that his basketball program is going the right direction.

"We have shown how Harbour Centre's basketball organization has grown through the years, how solid and organized it has become, from our programs for 12 years old and below to the ranks of top amateurs in the PBL and probably even the PBA in the near future," said the softspoken young executive.

Harbour Centre, the country's biggest non-containerized port terminal, has already made its mark in the PBL, but there is no secret that joining the PBA is its biggest goal.

And in the 2005 La Salle Alumni Basketball League Championships, Harbour continues to nurture that dream.

Backstopped by former PBA players Dindo Pumaren and Joey Sta. Maria, Harbour Centre won both the Division A (Open) and B (Fellowship) titles of the tournament.

Sta. Maria, Pumaren and Erick Arejola powered R2-Harbour Centre A past Orange Telecoms-Covenant, 77-71, to become the first team to win the championship for two straight years since the inception of the league nine years ago.

R2-Harbour Centre B, bannered by Nikki Romero, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito and Jerwin Agarao, beat La Salle-Dasma in a gripping finale, 68-63, to retain its Fellowship title.

Aside from its active involvement in the La Salle Alumni Basketball League, Harbour Centre also maintains a team in the Philippine Basketball League (PBL) and supports teams in other leagues in Metro Manila, including in the UAAP.

"I would like to thank the players for the effort they made," said Romero.

Two players of Harbour Centre teams also emerged MVP winners with Sta. Maria winning the prestigious award in the Open Division and Agarao taking the plum in the Fellowship Division.

INQBOX Question of the Week
How will the November 1 implementation of eVAT affect your life?
Win this *Inquirer shirt
Senders of d.best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Shirt!!
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(Maximum of 160 characters)
*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808 local 335. Provincial winners can text:
inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address
to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them

3 days to go
Battle of the Courts National Finals
Who will emerge as this year's champion?
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jane OLORVIDA
kate SYMACO
malou ANGELES
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Abangan ang announcement ng mga sinwerte sa Grand Draw!
*Winner gets 1 Petron Gasul tank refill per month for 1 year. Tank size will depend on the size of the winning entry.
GEN-U-WIN JACKPOT Da Repeat
PETRON Fuel Success.

A dying wish and a saint

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

WHILE THE TEXT message said the Nov. 12 affair at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium was an alumni reunion, some quarters perceive it to be a rally in disguise aimed to demolish the De la Salle Green Archers coaching staff. The text message is being sent to all La Salle alumni, students, faculty and anybody who is or was connected with the academe.

This is how the text message reads: "You may now spread the news of the alumni reunion aimed at bringing back honor, dignity and honesty to the DLSU sports programs, bannered by La Salle Hall-of-Famers Tommy Manotoc, Kurt Bachmann and Bert Garcia, on Saturday, November 12, 2 p.m. at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium."

Hey, are kibitzers welcome?

***

Although former POC president Julian Malonso was certain that participating teams in the basketball invitationals projected to take the place of the SEA Games basketball tournament, would be sanctioned by the Fiba for playing with a suspended country, I had my doubts.

"*Ang mangyayari diyan, baka pati sila masuspend,*" said the colonel.

My question is, how can the Fiba penalize the participants when the tournament isn't even Fiba sanctioned?

To get a second opinion, I consulted with another former POC head, Celso Dayrit.

His reply: "A sanction is possible if Fiba prohibits the Philippines from staging the Invitational and the teams from participating and they defy. I am not sure what the Fiba will do but I know they can make things more difficult for the Philippines in the future. Even the referees who will participate in the tournament could lose their Fiba license."

***

If there are questions about Blue Eagle Japeth Aguilar's high school diploma, scribe Teddy Pereña said the cager's Mapua teammate Michael Galinato should also be investigated because they both vanished from Mapua simultaneously.

"They were also both attending the tryouts for the 2003 RP youth team, *pero parehong hindi na bumalik*. The following UAAP season, Japeth was on the Ateneo bench while Galinato was wearing a Green Archers jersey," Teddy said.

According to a La Salle source, Galinato submitted a high school diploma but he could not remember the school where the cager graduated.

"Definitely he did not take the PEP test. He played one season for the Archers and was later kicked out for failing grades," our source said.

***

It's not easy to believe that Fedex cager Ronald Tubid has the face of a saint. But player agent Danny Espiritu swears that he does.

Ronald was the model used when the life-size statue of San Lorenzo Ruiz was sculpted, "*dahil kamukhang-kamukha niya ito,*" said Danny.

I thought Danny was putting me on. There is a San Lorenzo Ruiz statue at the Philam Homes Park in Quezon City which I have passed regularly for years, but I have not noticed any resemblance. Maybe I ought to take a closer look next time.

Could Tubid be the reincarnation of the Filipino saint? I wonder if he is just as pious.

***

Cage legend Jun Papa, who recently died of a heart attack, got his wish.

"Just before he died *kasi*, Jun requested for cremation and instructed me to put his ashes in a bottle of wine. *Isama ko daw sa kanyang* collection *na nakalagay sa* cabinet *para araw-araw, pwede siyang batiin ng kanyang mga anak. Hindi na kailangang dalawin sa sementeryo,*" Jun's widow, Waffles, related.

"*Sinunod ko naman, kasama na yung* ash container *sa parang arco ng mga alak niya ngayon sa bahay.*"

***

HOOPVINE: Our condolences to basketball hall-of-famer Tony Genato whose wife Carmen Tuason Matute died recently. The deceased is the half sister of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo… the latest from sportsbiz reporter Elmer Sta. Maria: "Majority of the Viva Hot Babes have taken a sudden interest in the PBA. Three were at the games last Sunday. 'Wonder who they were rooting for? (Katya Santos was rooting for Eric Menk according to the sportscasters).

RUNNING CHIEF: PNP Director-General Arturo Lomibao (right) is all smiles after running the recent 1st National Subic Marathon. The marathon was backed by Doctor J Rubbing Alcohol, Mizuno, Pagcor, Gatorade and Petron.

Makybe Diva triumphs

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—MAKYBE Diva, a seven-year-old English-born mare, become the first horse to win Australia's richest and most famous race three times in a row, scoring a stirring victory in Tuesday's Melbourne Cup at Flemington.

Carrying a record 58 kilograms (127.6 pounds) for a mare, Makybe Diva, owned by South Australian tuna fisherman Tony Santic, was the favorite in the $3.8 million-race over 3,200 meters.

Santic said it would be Makybe Diva's last race and that she would retire.

"I think to ask any more of this mare would not be fair," Santic said.

Makybe Diva was ridden by Glen Boss, who was aboard the horse on both previous Cup wins and also rode her to victory 10 days ago in the Cox Plate, a major pre-Melbourne Cup race.

"What a great mare, she's just unbelievable, and gives you so much confidence," said an emotional Boss.

On A Jeune was second, 1 1/4 lengths back, and Xcellent half a length further back in third.

Makybe Diva, which surged to the front with 200 meters (yards) to go, has won 15 of her 36 starts and earned more than $10.8 million in prize money.

Makybe Diva was named by taking the first two letters of the names of five women who work in Santic's tuna factory—Maureen, Kylie, Belinda, Diane and Vanessa.

AP

RACING TIPS

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Centra 2. Ginja 3. Nagmamahal 4. Lady Victoria/Ikaw Pag Asa Ko

Race 2—1. Hot Wind 2. Lady Cathy 3. Sweet Rose 4. Fourth of December 5. Jeff Stone

Race 3—1. Naughty 2. Jokes Only 3. Lovely Tara 4. Order of Merit

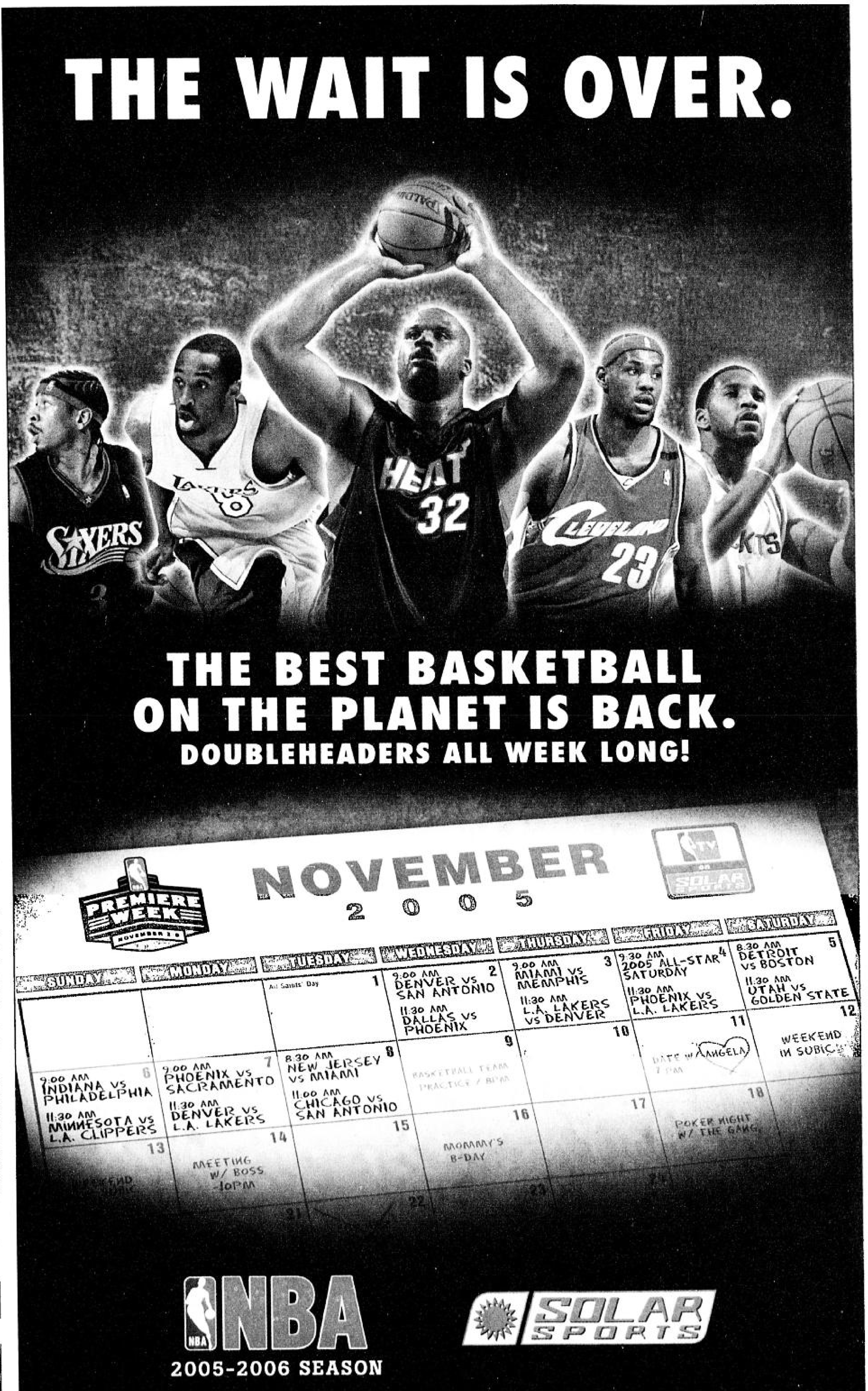
Race 4—1. Blue Sheikh 2. Real Black 3. Casanova 4. Reporter 5. Dagger Look

Race 5—1. Valentine Dancer 2. Royal Rose 3. Tochinic 4. Brazen Truth

Race 6—1. Joint Account 2. Joker 3. Apple Splash 4. Flaming Heart

Race 7—1. Triple Threat 2. Hok Kee Hok 3. ShezaWinner 4. Ayan Na Ko 5. Majestic Queen

Race 8—1. Morning Nell 2. Sham Sham 3. Awesome Power 4. Wild Orphan 5. Wing Away 6. Golden Treasure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3 9:00 AM MIAMI VS MEMPHIS 11:30 AM L.A. LAKERS VS DENVER
4 9:30 AM 2005 ALL-STAR SATURDAY 11:30 AM PHOENIX VS L.A. LAKERS
5 8:30 AM DETROIT VS BOSTON 11:30 AM UTAH VS GOLDEN STATE
6 9:00 AM INDIANA VS PHILADELPHIA 11:30 AM MINNESOTA VS L.A. CLIPPERS
7 9:00 AM PHOENIX VS SACRAMENTO 11:30 AM DENVER VS L.A. LAKERS
8 8:30 AM NEW JERSEY VS MIAMI 11:00 AM CHICAGO VS SAN ANTONIO
9 BASKETBALL TEAM PRACTICE / 8PM
10
11 DATE W/ ANGELA 7 PM
12 WEEKEND IN SUBIC
13
14 MEETING W/ BOSS -10PM
15
16 MOMMY'S B-DAY
17
18 POKER NIGHT W/ THE GANG
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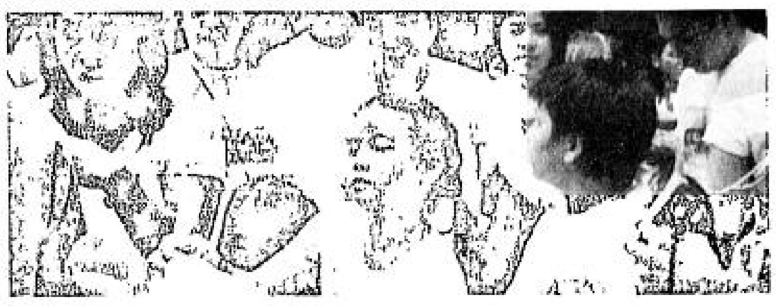

REACHING OUT
Child star Miles Ocampo gives away grocery items, toys and clothes at the Pangarap Shelter during a recent outreach activity of the cast and staff of "Mga Anghel na Walang Langit," an ABS-CBN drama series. Also in photo are co-stars Marianne dela Riva, Sylvia Sanchez, Klaudia Koronel and John Manalo.

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4	PARAISONG GUBAT
5	SOUND OF THUNDER

Fiesta World Mall
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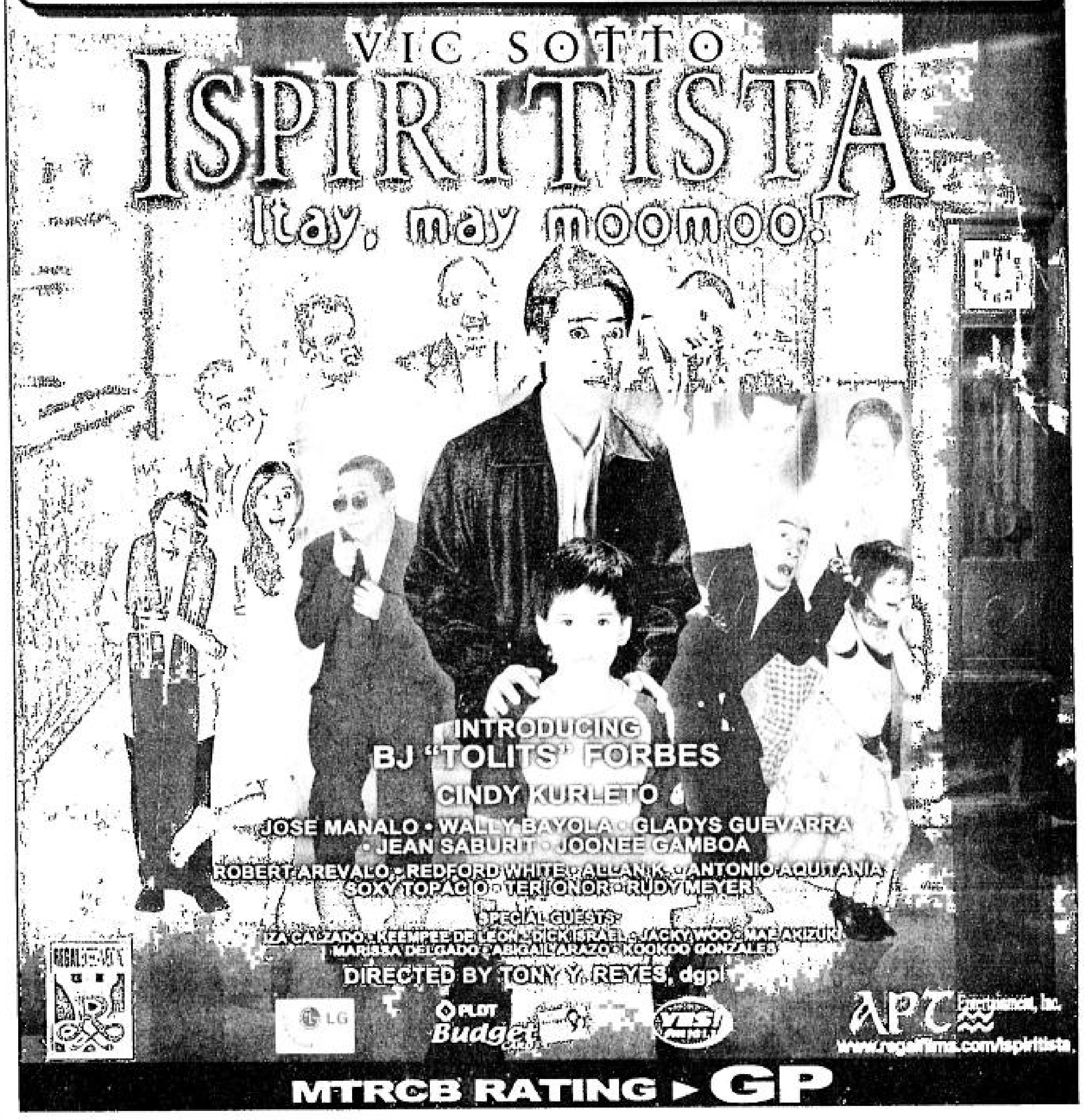
1	LEGEND OF ZORRO
2	ISPIRITISTA
3	DUBAI
4	TIM BURTON'S CORPSE BRIDE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	LEGEND OF ZORRO
2	PARAISONG GUBAT

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

#1 SA KATATAWANAN IN ITS 2ND WEEK!
CONGRATS TO BOSSING VIC & BJ, MGA GHOSTBUSTER NG BAYAN!!!

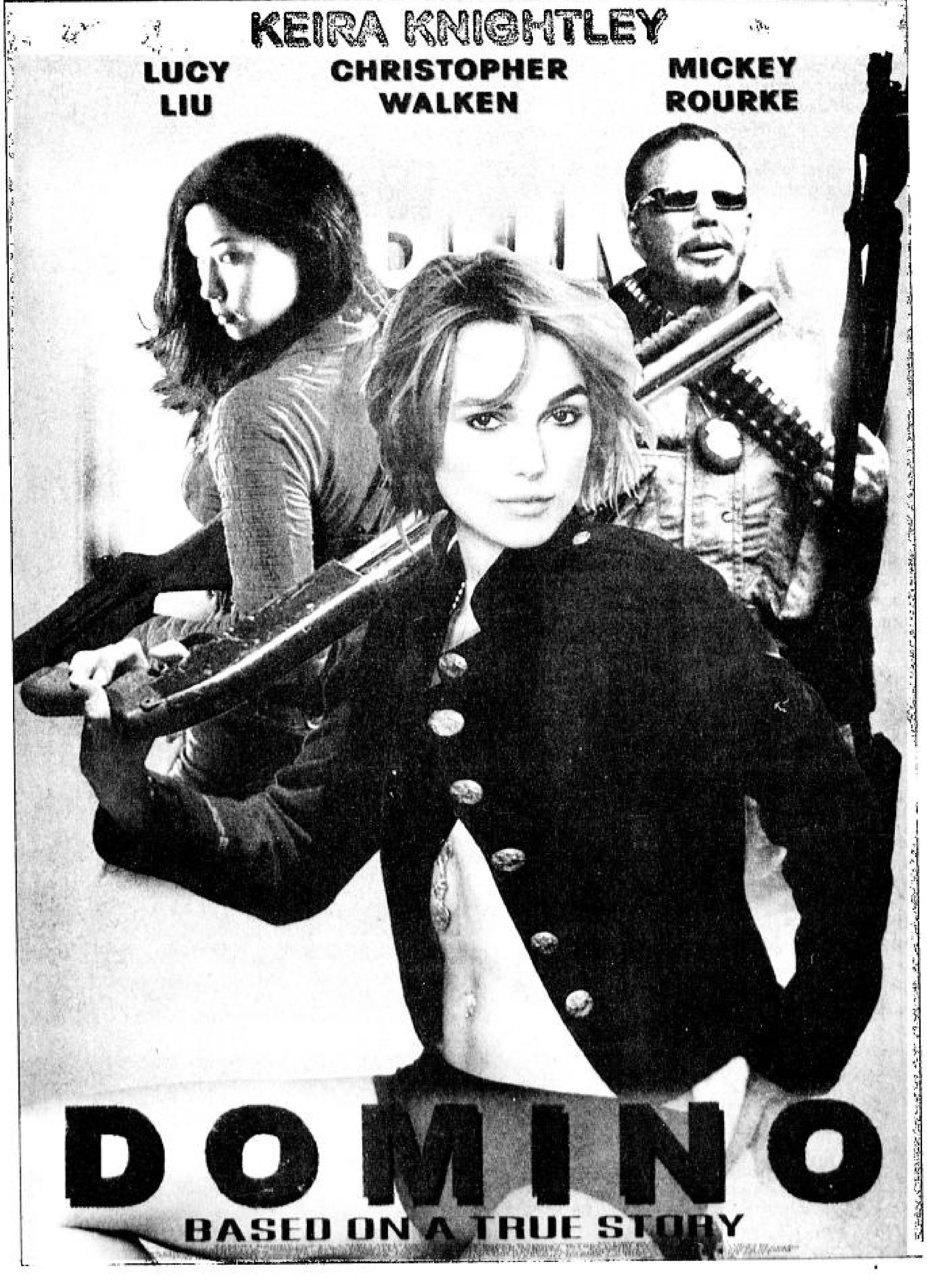

VIC SOTTO
ISPIRITISTA
Itay, may moomoo!
INTRODUCING
BJ "TOLITS" FORBES
CINDY KURLETO
JOSE MANALO • WALLY BAYOLA • GLADYS GUEVARRA
• JEAN SABURIT • JOONEE GAMBOA
ROBERT AREVALO • REDFORD WHITE • ALLAN K. • ANTONIO AQUITANIA
SOXY TOPACIO • TERI ONOR • RUDY MEYER
SPECIAL GUESTS:
IZA CALZADO • KEEMPEE DE LEON • DICK ISRAEL • JACKY WOO • MAE AKIZUKI
MARISSA DELGADO • ABIGAIL ARAZO • KOOKOO GONZALES
DIRECTED BY TONY Y. REYES, dgpi
LG
PLDT Budget
APT Entertainment, Inc.
www.regalfilms.com/ispiritista

MTRCB RATING ▶ GP

THE HUNT BEGINS TODAY

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP.
The R-13 classification is given with a caveat. However, that it comes with a strong advisory that the thematic content centering on violence should make this film unsuitable for most minors.

BOUNTY HUNTERS FOR HIRE
NOBODY DOES A BETTER JOB


KEIRA KNIGHTLEY
LUCY LIU
CHRISTOPHER WALKEN
MICKEY ROURKE
DOMINO
BASED ON A TRUE STORY

Let's help make dream movies

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

NEW FILMMAKERS ARE HAPPY THAT ALternative festivals like Cinemalaya and Cinema One are providing production grants for digital movies. But what about our established screenplay writers and directors?

They don't often get the chance to make the movie they really want, so there should be seed money provided for them as well.

Some people may scoff at the very idea, believing that most established filmmakers have been completely co-opted by the commercial movie industry, or don't want to make small-budget digital features.

Not true. Quite a number of veteran filmmakers we've talked to say that they too want to "go digital," so they can finally make their dream films, without having to compromise with producers' commercial requirements.

So, we wish that a producer or film organization would offer each interested veteran filmmaker P1M to fund his or her dream production. The financier could share in the movie's profits once it's released, thus making it a rewarding business proposition for himself, as well.

Think of it. With only P10 M, the financier would be able to effect one production of 10 quality movies by our better writers and directors!

That would be a real service and boon during these lean movie times, and cause for celebration in this film season, when there's not enough reason to celebrate.

Even as we look forward to our suggestion falling on receptive ears, we would like to share the glad tidings of a new movie competition in the works that's open to all filmmakers, both new and established. It should see the light of cinematic day next year! More we cannot say just yet...

With all of the new initiatives intended to boost the local film industry's flagging fortunes, 2006 should be a landmark year in Filipino movies' journey toward recovery. Let's all work hard to make it happen!

Feedback

FROM psychologist-educator **Lorenzo S. Abacon** of Meycauayan, Bulacan: "One of the main assets of 'Pinoy Big Brother' is its theme song, which has the power to elicit one's sense of pride in being Filipino, without being mushy or trite in its approach.

"Another plus point is its effort to familiarize the viewing public with a new genre which, in turn, can broaden its horizons. Likewise, it is able to prove that a show can lick even without big stars.

"However, these plus points are eclipsed by the following indirect messages that the program intentionally or unintentionally conveys"

"1) It is cool to look into and talk about other people's lives. 'PBB,' being a '*teleserye ng tunay na buhay*,' can be a training ground for its followers to be likewise keen on watching and discussing the lives of their *kapitbahay, kasama sa opisina*, etc.

"2) There is nothing wrong about being a friend to their housemates on weekdays, then be responsible for their eviction on weekends.

"3) Just obey in order to be rewarded. The housemates have to follow all of Big Brother's orders whatever time he wants, even if this means losing their privacy, since the bottom line here is the show's material rewards.

"4) Maximum body exposure as compensating tool for minimal talents. The housemates' 'concert' last Oct. 10 attests to this: the majority of them, especially the girls, lacked talent in singing and dancing, so they tried to offset them by donning scanty dresses and moving sexily.

"As a whole, it can be said that 'PBB' thrives on controversy, but not on quality."

New Nick shows

THIS month, Nickelodeon premiers two live-action comedies to help kids bone up for school—"Zoey 101" (starring **Jamie Lyn Spears**) and "Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide" with **Devon Werkheiser**.

Spears plays 13-year-old Zoey Brooks, a spunky, winsome leader whose independent nature is put to the test at the newly co-ed Pacific Coast Academy. "Zoey 101" starts telecasting Nov. 19.

And Ned Bigby, the protagonist in "Declassified," is an insightful teen who aims not only to survive, but also thrive and have fun. So, he creates the ultimate school survival guide, full of tips and tricks to contend with the nerve-wracking and embarrassing situations that young students face. The new show begins Nov. 14.

GRIFFIN FOR GREENPEACE
Smart and sexy Amanda Griffin is only too happy to support the Greenpeace anti-global warming campaign. During a recent signature blitz in aid of a petition for the movement, the model-VJ told the Saturday mall crowd, "It's not too late to start doing something."

SHANG CINEPLEX
① FOUR BROTHERS MTRCB R-13
② THE LEGEND OF ZORRO MTRCB. GP
③ WAITING MTRCB: R-13
④ DOMINO MTRCB R-13
PREMIERE THEATRE THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
MTRCB GP
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
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OPENS IN SHANG CINEPLEX ON NOV. 16.
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STARTING OCT. 28!
Regular Ticket Price
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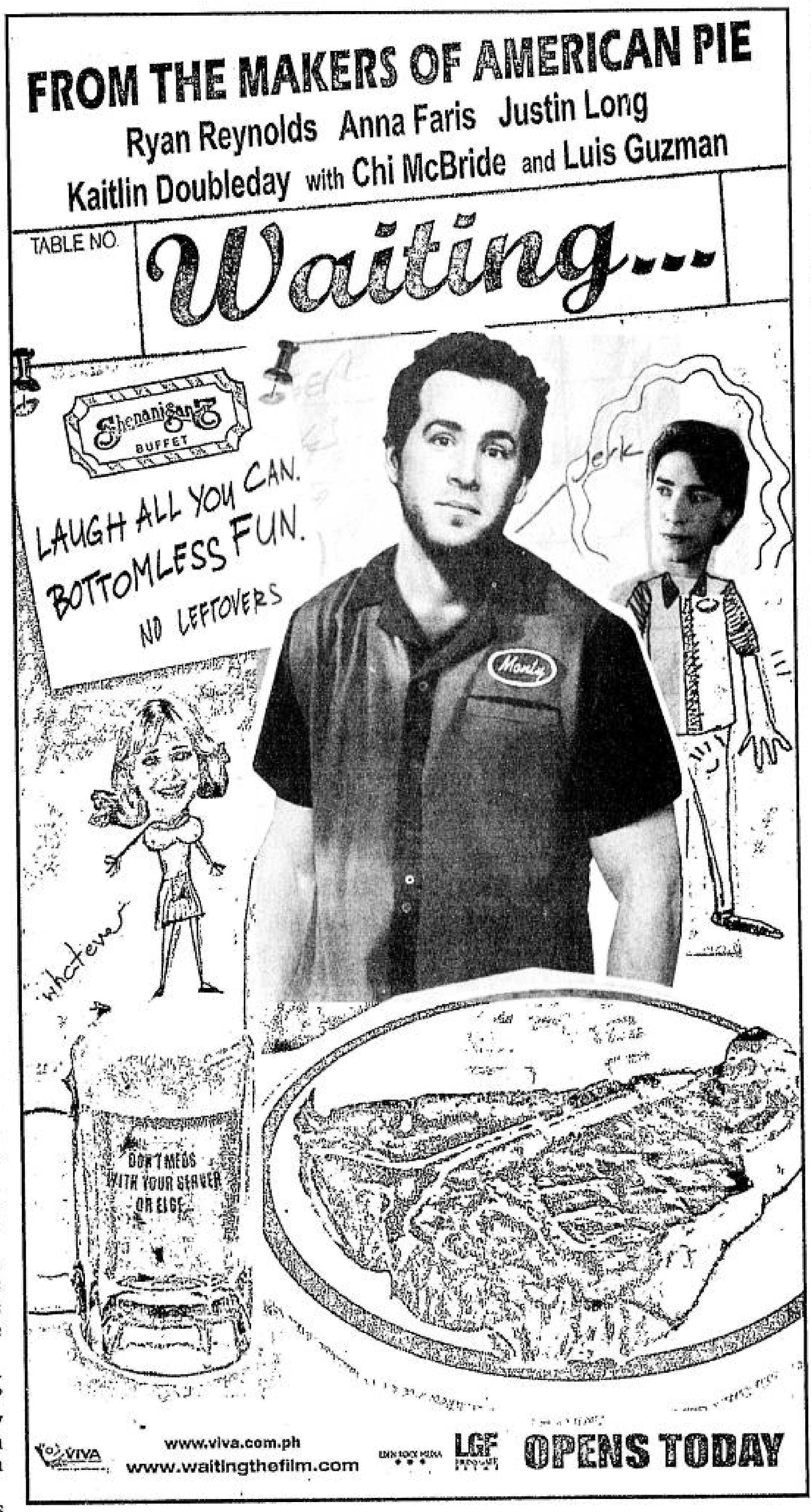
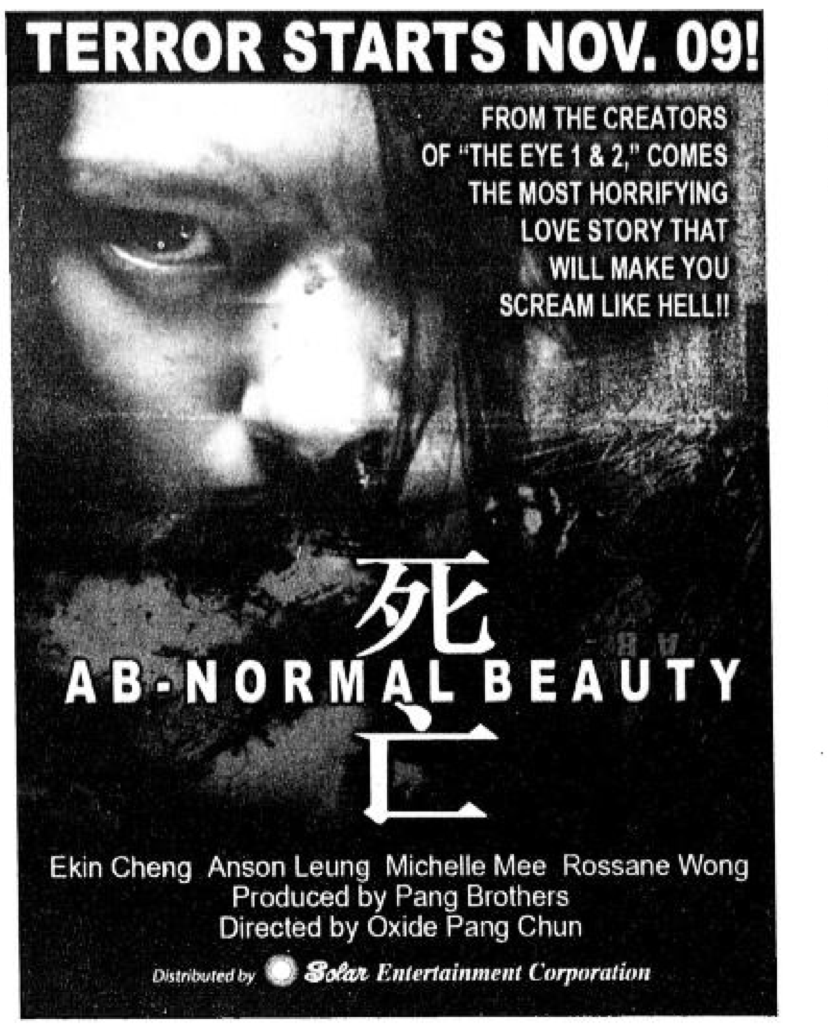
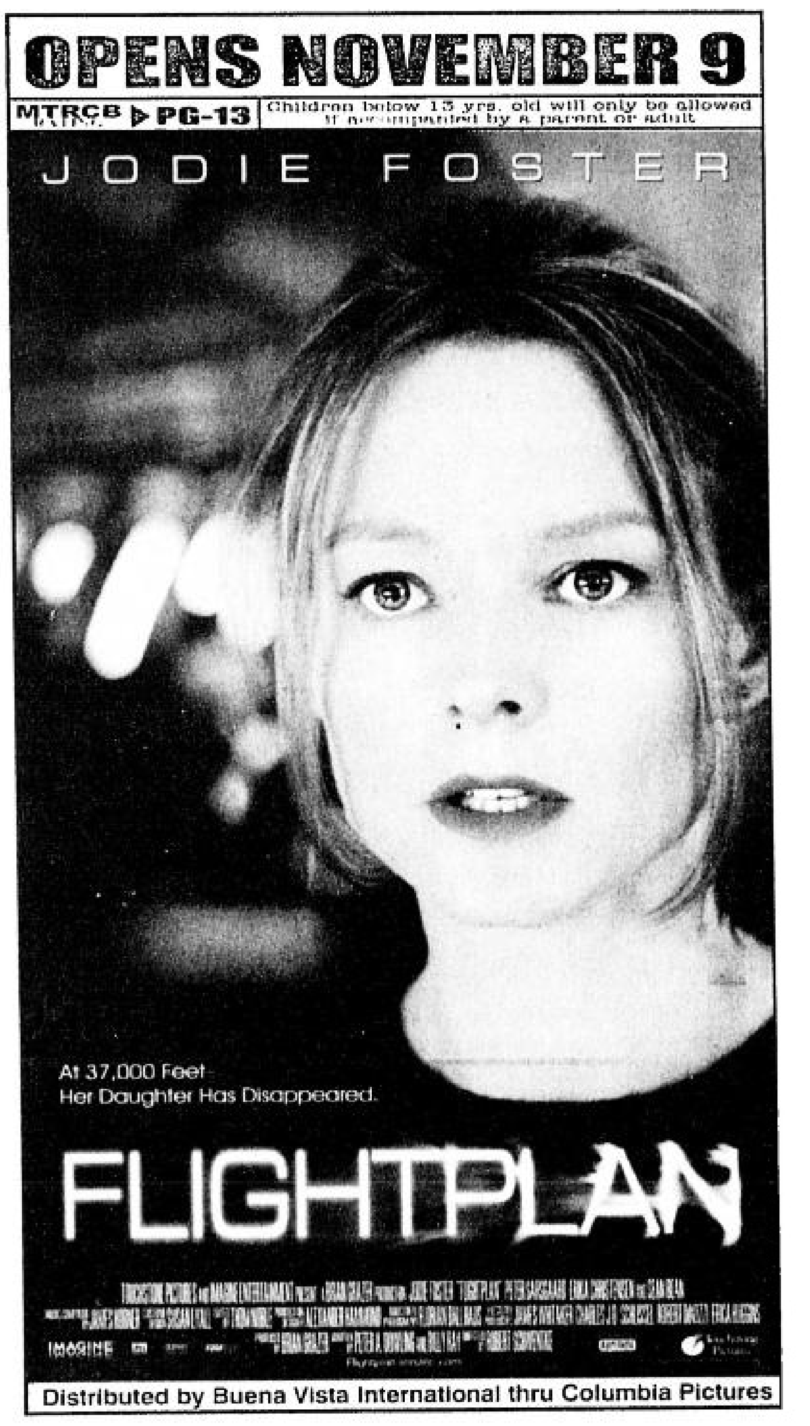
Shangri-La Plaza



FROM THE MAKERS OF AMERICAN PIE
Ryan Reynolds Anna Faris Justin Long
Kaitlin Doubleday with Chi McBride and Luis Guzman
TABLE NO. Waiting...
www.viva.com.ph
www.waitingthefilm.com
OPENS TODAY



TERROR STARTS NOV. 09!
FROM THE CREATORS OF "THE EYE 1 & 2," COMES THE MOST HORRIFYING LOVE STORY THAT WILL MAKE YOU SCREAM LIKE HELL!!
死亡
AB-NORMAL BEAUTY
Ekin Cheng Anson Leung Michelle Mee Rossane Wong
Produced by Pang Brothers
Directed by Oxide Pang Chun
Distributed by Solar Entertainment Corporation



OPENS NOVEMBER 9
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
JODIE FOSTER
At 37,000 Feet
Her Daughter Has Disappeared.
FLIGHTPLAN
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

Bring the entire family!
SECOND WEEK!
MTRCB RATING ▶ G ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED
ANTONIO BANDERAS CATHERINE ZETA-JONES
THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
www.SonyPictures.net
Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES

MTRCB RATING R-13 2ND WEEK!
NO ONE GETS OUT ALIVE
DWAYNE "THE ROCK" JOHNSON
KARL URBAN
ROSAMUND PIKE
RAZ ADOTI
DOOM
www.doommovie.com
united international pictures A release through Solar Entertainment Corporation A UNIVERSAL PICTURE

MTRCB RATING R-13
OPENS TODAY
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF '2 FAST, 2 FURIOUS'
MARK WAHLBERG
TYRESE GIBSON ANDRÉ BENJAMIN GARRETT HEDL
FOUR BROTHERS
They came home to bury their mother...and her killer.
www.uip.com
www.fourbrothersmovie.co.uk
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IN THEATERS ON NOVEMBER 16

movietime SCHEDULE AND EVENTS
NOW SHOWING
1 DOMINO
2 FOUR BROTHERS
3 THE GHOST INSIDE
4 WAITING

DOMINO
BARBIE XU
Waiting...

GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 FLIGHT PLAN
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
MEGAMALL
1 DOOM

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 FLIGHT PLAN
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
3 TRANSPORTER 2

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 DOOM
2 THE GHOST INSIDE
3 FOUR BROTHERS
4 ISPIRISTISTA
5 DOMINO
6 LORD OF WAR
7 WAITING
8 ISPIRITISTA
9 LEGEND OF ZORRO
10 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
11 DEUCE BIGALOW
12 MY SASSY GIRL

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 DOMINO
3 FOUR BROTHERS
4 THE GHOST INSIDE
5 ISPIRITISTA
6 DEUCE BIGALOW
7 DOOM
8 MY SASSY GIRL
9 WAITING
10 DUBAI

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 WAITING
4 DOMINO

SM VALENZUELA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 DOOM

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 DEUCE BIGALOW
2 LORD OF WAR
3 DOOM
4 FOUR BROTHERS
5 DOMINO
6 ISPIRITISTA
7 LEGEND OF ZORRO
8 THE GHOST INSIDE
9 MY SASSY GIRL
10 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
11 LAND OF THE DEAD
12 DUBAI

SM SOUTHMALL
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 FOUR BROTHERS
4 DOMINO
5 WAITING
6 THE GHOST INSIDE
7 DOOM
8 DUBAI
9 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
10 MY SASSY GIRL

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 WAITING
2 DOMINO
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 LEGEND OF ZORRO

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 FOUR BROTHERS
2 WAITING
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
5 THE GHOST INSIDE
6 DOOM
7 LEGEND OF ZORRO
8 DOMINO

SM CITY MANILA
1 DOOM
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
3 DOMINO
4 FOUR BROTHERS
5 MY SASSY GIRL
6 LEGEND OF ZORRO
7 ISPIRITISTA
8 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
9 ISPIRITISTA
10 DEUCE BIGALOW
11 WAITING
12 THE GHOST INSIDE

SM CINEMA SAN LAZARO
1 DOMINO
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
3 WAITING
4 DOOM
5 ISPIRITISTA
6 ISPIRITISTA

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November 4 - 30

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS
3 DOOM
4 ISPIRITISTA
5 TIM BURTON'S CORPSE BRIDE
6 ISPIRITISTA

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 INTO THE BLUE
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 DOOM

SM CITY BACOOR
1 WAITING
2 DUBAI
3 LEGEND OF ZORRO
4 ISPIRITISTA
5 DOMINO
6 ISPIRITISTA
7 MY SASSY GIRL
8 DOOM

SM CITY MARILAO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 TRANSPORTER 2

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 INTO THE BLUE
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

SM CITY LUCENA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 LORD OF WAR
3 INTO THE BLUE
4 ISPIRITISTA

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 A SOUND OF THUNDER
3 LORD OF WAR
4 ISPIRITISTA

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 TIM BURTON'S CORPSE BRIDE
3 TRANSPORTER 2
4 WAITING
5 TRUTH ABOUT LOVE
6 DEUCE BIGALOW
7 ISPIRITISTA
8 DOOM

SM CITY ILOILO
1 LORD OF WAR
2 RESERVED
3 WALLACE AND GROMIT
4 ISPIRITISTA
5 LEGEND OF ZORRO
6 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS
7 RESERVED
8 BLADE OF ROSE

SM CITY DAVAO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 ONE MISSED CALL 2
5 WALLACE AND GROMIT
5 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 WALLACE AND GROMIT
3 INTO THE BLUE
4 LORD OF WAR

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E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
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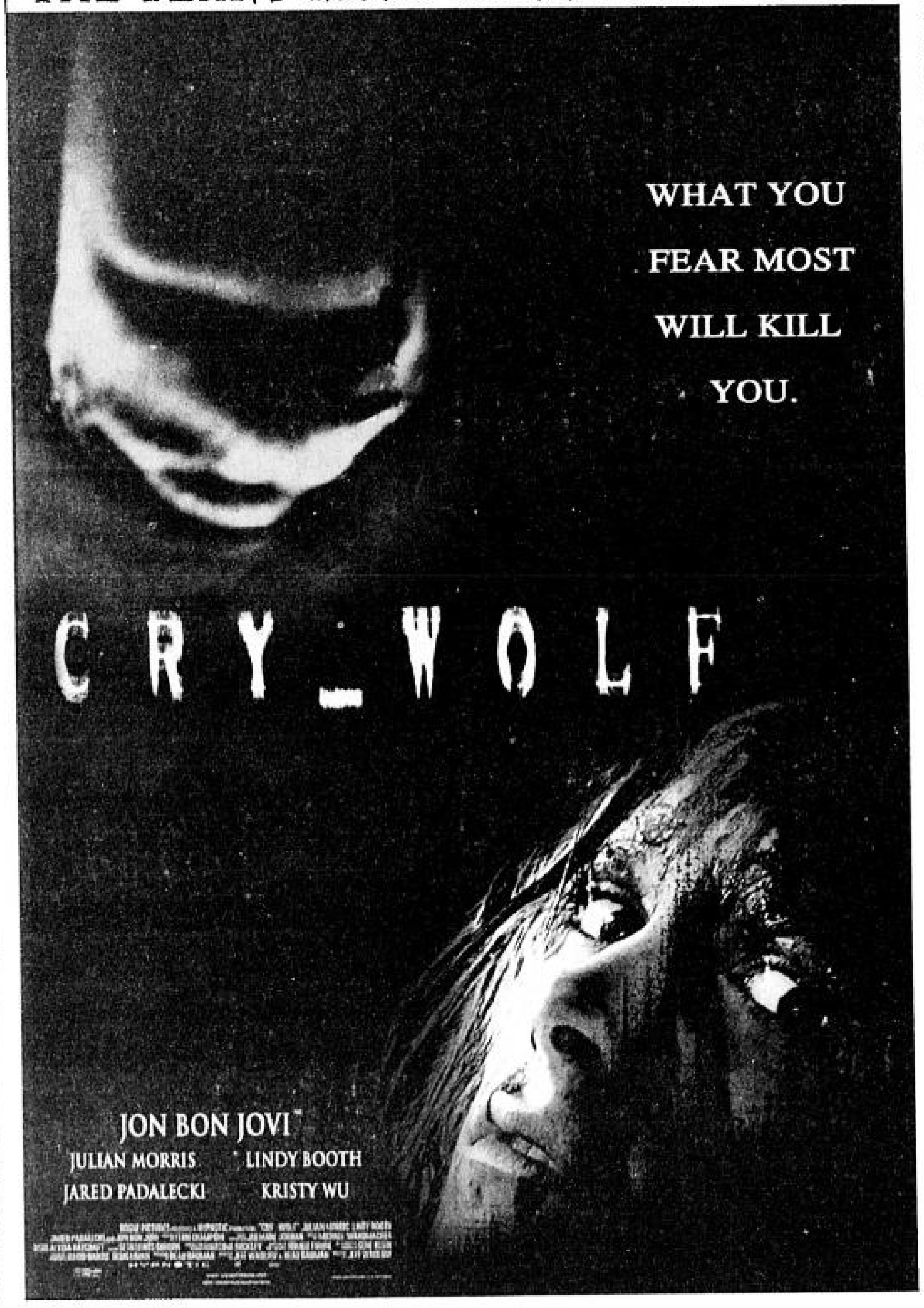
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 FOUR BROTHERS 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00 R-13
2 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO GP
3 DOMINO 11:40, 2:25, 5:10, 7:55, 10:40 R-13
4 WAITING R-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

DOMINO R13 11:40,2:20,5:00,7:40,10:20
THE LEGEND OF ZORRO GP 12:50,3:30,6:10,8:50
WAITING R13 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00
FOUR BROTHERS R13 1:10,3:30,5:50,8:10,10:30
DOOM R13 1:45,3:55,6:05,8:15
THE LEGEND OF ZORRO GP 1:50,4:30,7:10,9:50

OPENS NOV. 9
THE YEAR'S MOST TERRIFYING FILM!



Araneta Center Leisure Guide

CINEMA SCHEDULES
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P120 RESERVED SEATS
GLOBE PLATINUM P249 / P299
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
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THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 1:20 / 4:05 / 6:50 / 9:35
THE FOUR BROTHERS 1:05 / 3:50 / 6:35 / 9:20
WAITING 12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20
THE GHOST INSIDE 12:30 / 2:40 / 4:50 / 7:00 / 9:10
DOMINO 12:50 / 3:40 / 6:30 / 9:20

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 12:45 / 3:30 / 6:15 / 9:00
DEUCE BIGALOW 2 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:30
DOOM 1:50 / 4:20 / 6:50 / 9:20
ISPIRITISTA 12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30
THE 40 YR OLD VIRGIN 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00

ALI MALL CINEMAS
1 ISPIRITISTA 12:00 R4 / 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20
2 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 12:00 R2 / 2:25 / 5:10 / 7:55
3 THE FOUR BROTHERS 12:20 / 3:05 / 5:50 / 8:35
4 THE GHOST INSIDE 11:25 / 1:35 / 3:45 / 5:55 / 8:05
5 DOMINO 12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
Nov. 6 Sunday GINEBRA vs AIR 21 4:10 pm
ALASKA vs TALK N TEXT 6:40 pm
Nov. 9 Wed SAN MIGUEL vs STA LUCIA 4:40 pm
COCA COLA vs PUREFOODS 7:25 pm
LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

FOSTER and Lawston soar, just the same

'Flightplan' takes off, with hitches

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

BUCKLE UP! "FLIGHTPLAN" IS ANOTHER thriller set in an airplane full of indifferent passengers. Only a few months after Wes Craven's "Red Eye," this movie on hostage-taking in the skies takes off. The similarities end there, as acting powerhouse Jodie Foster carries the film practically by herself and makes the viewer feel harrowing dangers along with her.

That's the beauty of casting Foster in suspense flicks. She lends authenticity to any trouble. She projects a no-nonsense aura that makes her performance extra-intriguing when her character Kyle, a Berlin-based propulsion engineer, gets into nail-biting situations.

No effort

Foster knows how to convey pain and loss without really trying, which becomes especially genuine from our end when her young daughter, Julia (Marlene Lawston) goes missing during their flight back to America.

Kyle frantically scours every nook and cranny of the two-floor, state-of-the-art plane, which really distracts its pilot (Sean Bean), his crew of bewildered flight attendants, an air marshal (Peter Sarsgaard), and soon enough, her fellow passengers. The buildup is consistently tense and the premise doesn't seem farfetched at all.

That's why one gets the mixed feeling of excitement and dread once the answers are revealed. When Kyle herself pieces things together, they get a little hokey. She's flung into a predictable Tom-and-Jerry imbroglio in the labyrinthine confines of the superbly designed aircraft.

A bit messy

The pace is ably handled and the shots are well composed, but the editing gets a bit messy towards the end, particularly with a scene that involves flashy special effects. The lines become awkward at that point, too, overly stating the obvious and marring an otherwise decently written script. Regardless, Foster soars, and soars high.

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

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GALLERIA
632-9116

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2• THX
2 DOMINO
3 FOUR BROTHERS
4 WAITING
5 GHOST INSIDE
6 DOOM
7 MY SASSY GIRL
8 ISPIRITISTA
9 THE 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
10 DEUCE BIGALOW 2

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 DOMINO
2 GHOST INSIDE
3 DOOM
4 FOUR BROTHERS
5 ISPIRITISTA
6 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
7 WAITING

METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
2 DEUCE BIGALOW 2
3 GHOST INSIDE
4 DOOM
5 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
6 DOMINO
7 MY SASSY GIRL
8 ISPIRITISTA

NOVALICHES
935-3231 / 935-3229-30

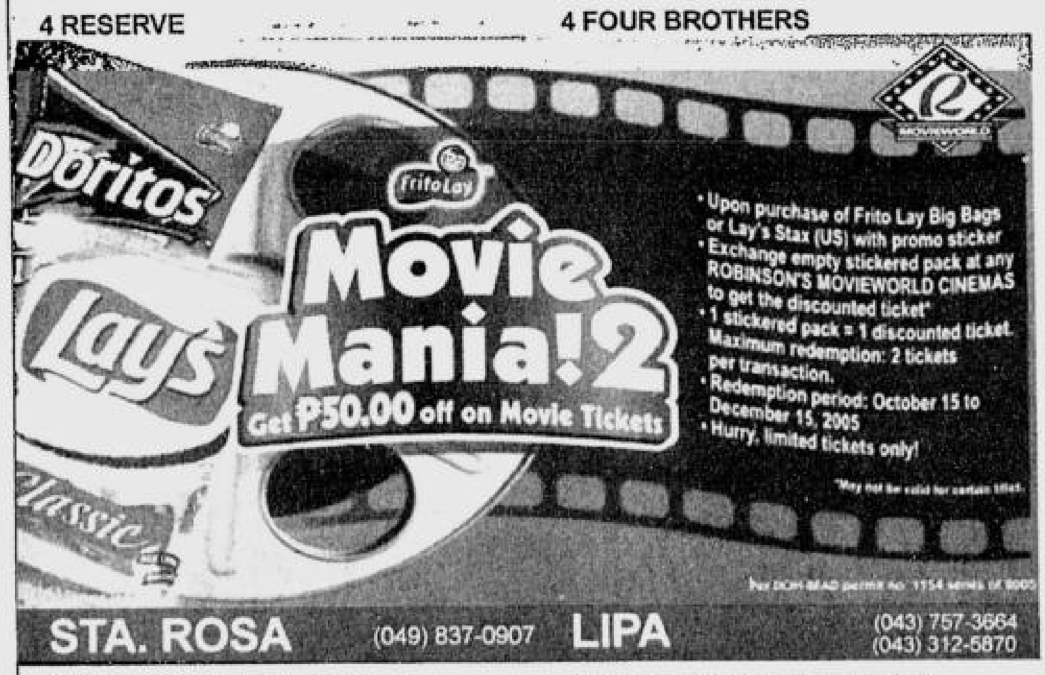
1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 GHOST INSIDE
3 DOMINO
4 DOOM

CITISQUARE MALABON
288-2575

1 ISPIRITISTA
2 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS 2
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER
687-5378

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 WAITING
3 DOMINO
4 FOUR BROTHERS



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*May not be valid for certain titles.

Per DOH-BFAD permit no. 1154 series of 2005

STA. ROSA
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1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 UNDISCOVERED
4 DOOM

LIPA
(043) 757-3664
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1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 LORD OF WAR
4 UNDISCOVERED

DASMARIÑAS
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1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS 2
4 INTO THE BLUE

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1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 CORPSE BRIDE
4 DOOM

IMUS
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1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 WAITING
4 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS 2

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1 CORPSE BRIDE
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 DOOM
4 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS 2
5 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
6 WILD SIDE

BACOLOD
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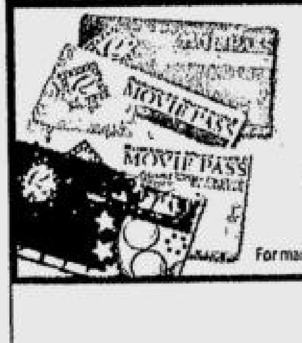
(034) 441-0459

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 THE 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 INTO THE BLUE
5 SHANGHAI LILY
6 A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

ILOILO
(033) 338-8070

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 LORD OF WAR
3 THE DESCENT
4 WALLACE AND GROMIT



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A1-483, Series of 2005

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Ansons Appliances Exhibit November 2 to 16, 2005	AV Surfer October 31 to November 15 Christmas Serenade w/ Afinity Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30	DSWD's Regional Children's Contest November 8

AYALA GREENBELT

Tree Lighting Ceremony
November 10, 2005 - Greenbelt 3 Lobby
Anton Ramos & The Phil. Philharmonic Orchestra Show
November 12 to 13, 2005 - Greenbelt 3 Park

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November 11 to December 18, 2005
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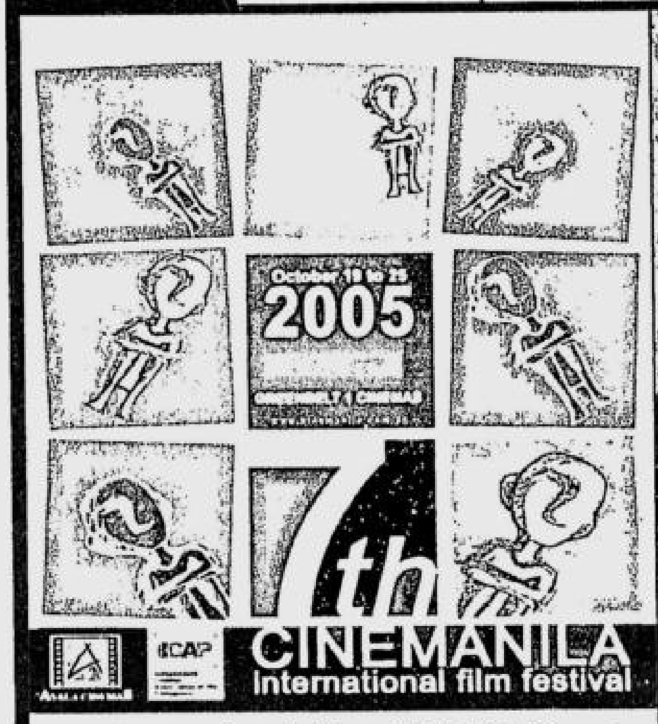
G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 FOUR BROTHERS	2 LEGEND OF ZORRO	3 DOMINO	4 ISPIRITISTA
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 WAITING	2 DOMINO	3 THX LEGEND OF ZORRO 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 DEUCE BIGALOW: EUROPEAN GIGOLO	5 THE 40 YR. OLD VIRGIN	6 FOUR BROTHERS	7 ISPIRITISTA
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 LEGEND OF ZORRO 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:45	2 CINEMANILA For inquiries, call 750-4180 to 81		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX FOUR BROTHERS 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX LEGEND OF ZORRO 2:45, 5:30, 8:15, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 THE 40 YR. OLD VIRGIN 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 WAITING 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 DOMINO 1:00, 3:35, 6:10, 8:45, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX LEGEND OF ZORRO	2 FOUR BROTHERS		
	3 DOMINO	4 ISPIRITISTA	5 WAITING	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 LEGEND OF ZORRO	2 CORPSE BRIDE	3 WALLACE & GROMIT	4 WAITING



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SCULPTURED TREATS

Nov. 6, Central Plaza
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ENTERTAINMENT

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Miss Earth 2005 record-breaking

By Armin Adina

THE 2005 MISS EARTH Pageant was truly record-breaking. It had the biggest number of beauty contestants that the country ever attracted and the coronation night at the UP Theater on Oct. 23 was crisp, and finished on time.

This year, the Manila-based pageant had 80 participants. Last year's register was only 61. The 1994 Miss Universe pageant held in Manila had 77 contestants.

The coronation program started at 7:30 p.m. By 11 p.m., Venezuela's Alexandra Braun, earlier proclaimed Best in Swimsuit, was crowned—to the crowd's roaring approval. The delayed telecast on ABS-CBN started around 10 p.m. and ended a few minutes past midnight.

Pleasant surprise

It was pleasantly surprising that the Philippines, rather known for excruciatingly long pageant ceremonies—international or not—managed to come up with such a fast-paced show. A pre-taped video segment served as the candidates' introduction, precious time off from on-stage presentations.

Special awards were kept to a minimum—only pageant presentor Pond's gave out corporate awards.

Host Ariel Ureta was a master of his craft. Fellow host Amanda Griffin could very well be a candidate herself, but she certainly has a lot to learn from the television stalwart.

Pinoy theme

The proceedings had a Filipino theme. For the opening number, the girls sang a remix version of Kitchie Nadal's "Bulong" while the Bellestar Dancers performed traditional dances from the country's three island groups. The delegates wore traditional Filipino costumes.

Early favorite Yevgeniya Durenko of Ukraine missed the Top 16. But to the delight of the crowd, she made a final parade on stage while the rest of the candidates proceeded backstage. She was proclaimed Miss Talent for a sultry ballroom number.

Malaysia's Hui Ting Pang missed a few steps on the stairs during the swimsuit parade and landed on the floor. But she failed to do a Miriam Quiambao and missed the semifinals as well.

Miss Philippines Genebelle Raagas received a thundering applause when she made it to the semis.

Chile's Nataly Chilet had one of the biggest cheering squads in the packed theater. The Chilean delegation even hired a marching band from Mandaluyong. Chilet was proclaimed Miss Photogenic and was in the Top 8.

Instead of asking the semifinalists to interpret a photograph, a painting or a video clip as in the past years,

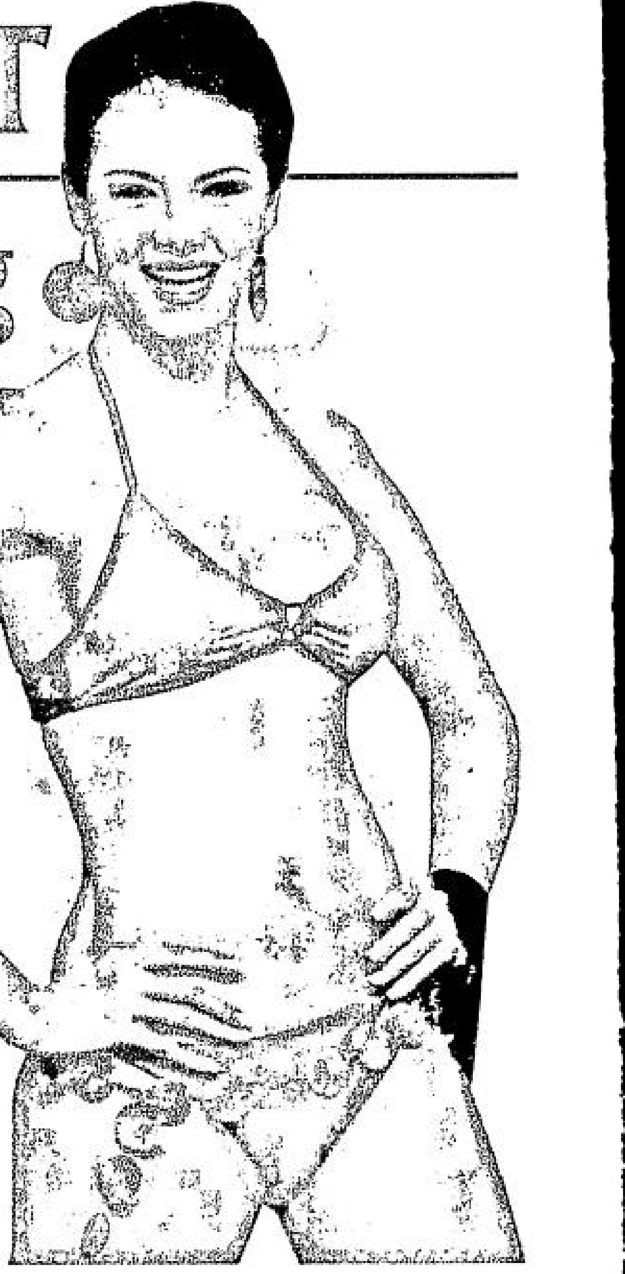
the delegates were made to answer questions from famous Filipinos, which included boxing champ Manny Pacquiao, Talent Olympics grand champion Ged Maddela and Miss International 1979 Melanie Marquez.

Next host country

Serbia and Montenegro's Jovana Marjanovic struggled with her limited English and her interpreter offered very little help. But for the final round, Maja Stojanovska of Macedonia offered to be her interpreter and the Serbian lass was proclaimed Miss Fire.

Manila-based pageant organizer Carousel Productions announced that Santiago, Chile will host the sixth Miss Earth pageant next year. *With a report from Camille Labayen*

(Watch Miss Earth 2005 on Star World, Nov. 18 at 9 p.m.)



ALEXANDRA **Braun Waldeck, 22, winsome winner**

Aria Productions Inc.
in cooperation with GMA
Co-Presented by Promil Kid bench/
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Reflections
with guets:
Ms. Ai-Ai delas Alas
Jonalyn Viray
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Raul Mitra
Aliw Theater, CCP Complex
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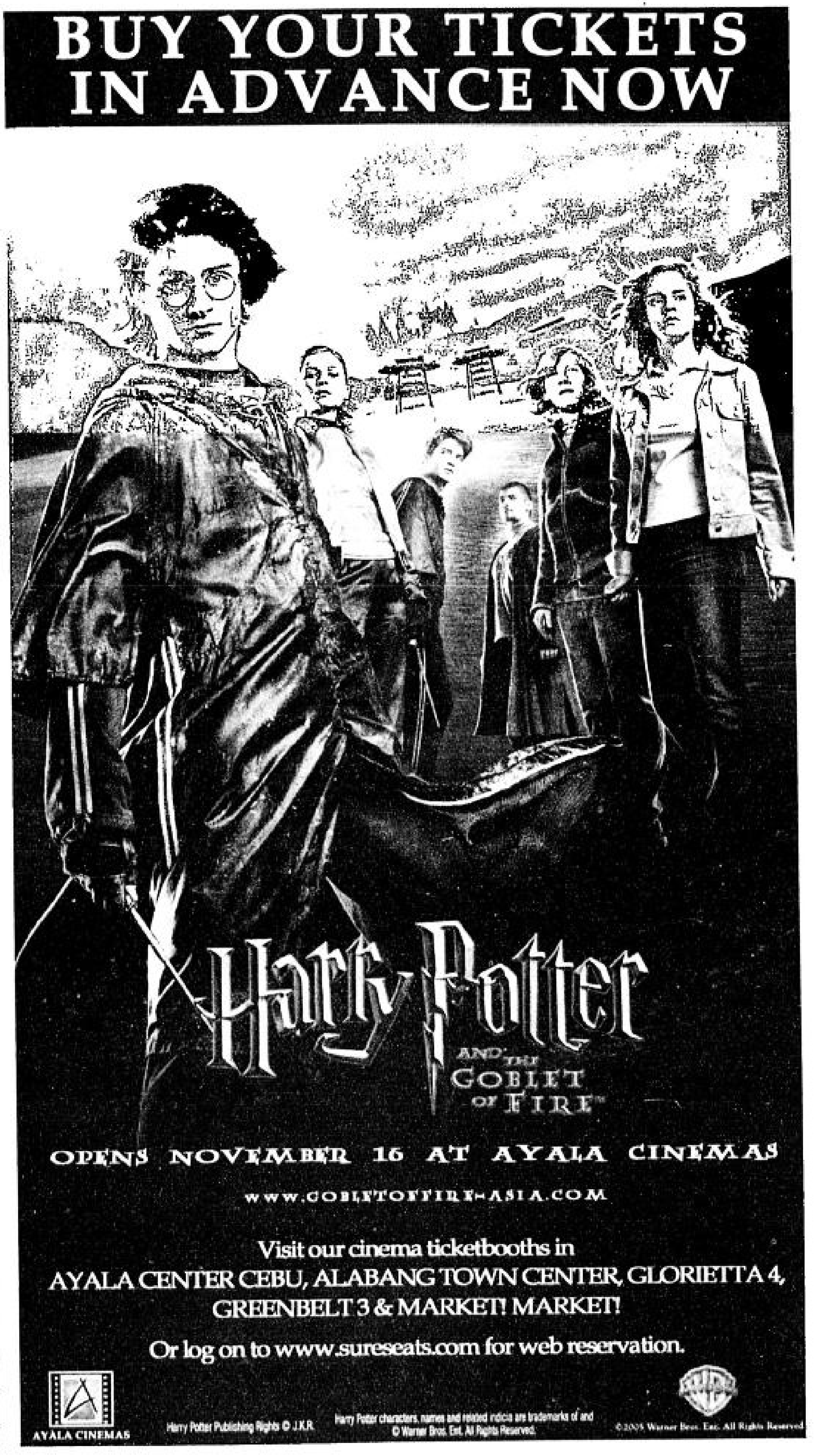

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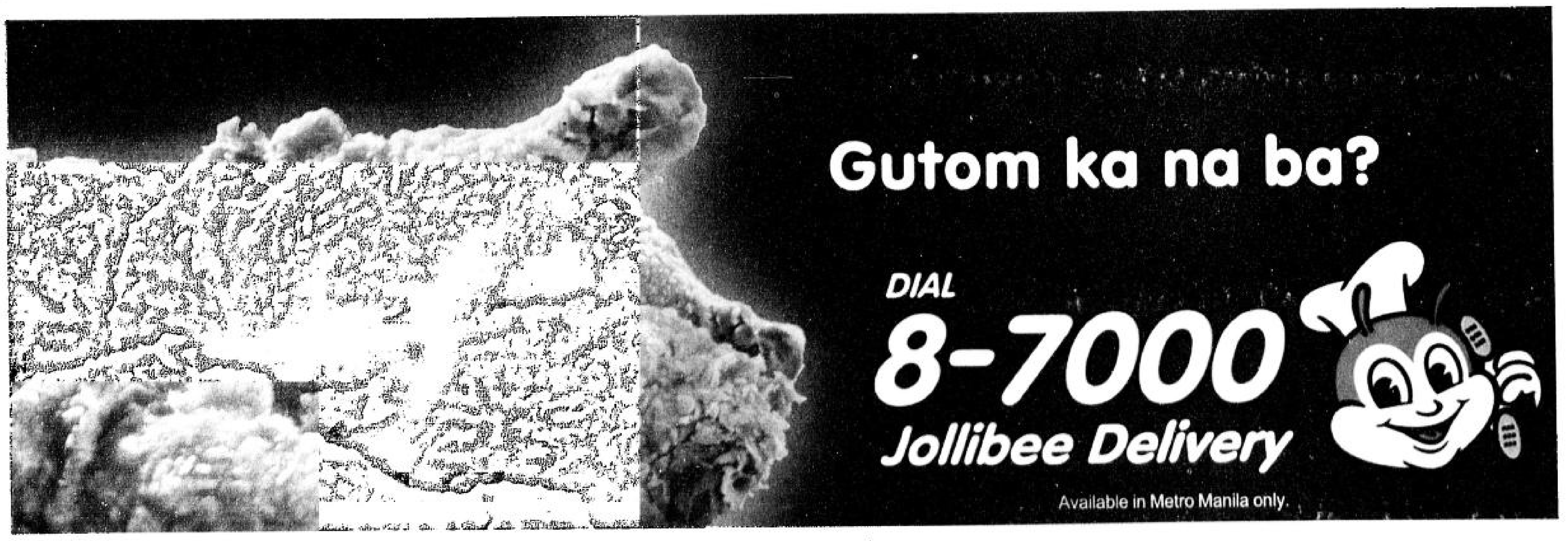

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WHAT'S INSIDE
Court stops Calatagan sale /B3
P30-M fund set up for drugstore program /B8

State-owned mining company eyes IPO

Needs funds for Mindanao projects

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

STATE-OWNED NATURAL RESOURCES Mining Development Corp. is planning to raise funds for its various exploration and development projects through an initial public offering, NRMDC chair Artemio Disini said.

Disini, who also chairs the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, said NRMDC was tapping the government-run Development Bank of the Philippines as its financial consultant to study the plan.

Disini said that they were unfazed by reports of an accident at the Diwalwal mine in Compostela Valley in Mindanao since NRMDC was involved in the drilling of the Balite Vein, more than half a kilometer from the reported gold mine site that collapsed.

Disini said NRMDC has mined approximately 2.7 million ounces of gold at its Diwalwal mine.

NRMDC earlier said it received offers from 13 local and foreign investors on a joint venture in developing the Dinagat Island chromite reserve project in Northern Surigao in Mindanao.

The Dinagat chromite reservation, covering 9,775 hectares, has two project areas: Parcel 1 is the 600-hectare area in the village of Esperanza in Lorenzo town; Parcel 2 covers 9,175 hectares at the southern tip of the island.

About 1,000 miners are doing small-scale operations at the project site, Disini said.

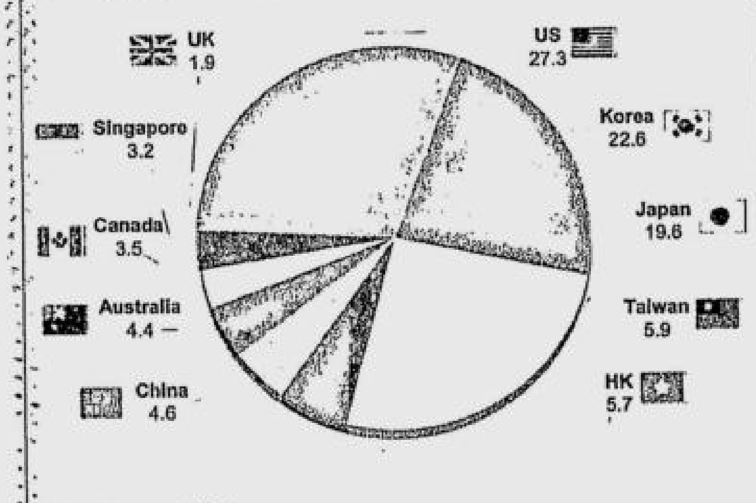
Studies by the United Nations Development Program in the 1980s and the 1990s showed significant chromite and copper deposits in the government area waiting to be tapped.

Disini had said that NRMDC, the corporate arm of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, was advised by its financial adviser to go into strategic joint venture arrangements with interested partners for the project, which may require about P1 billion in financing.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Top 10 visitor arrivals by country of residence
(January-July 2005, in percent)



Source: Department of Tourism

TOURIST arrivals in the Philippines during the first half of 2005 were dominated by fellow Asians. Although the United States accounted for the most tourists from a single country, almost half of the total 1.5 million visitors here from January to July came from other parts of Asia. Of the total number of visitors, 79 percent came from the top 10 countries of residence listed above.

Jamie Alarcon, **PDI Research**

PAL eyes flights to India, LA

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES WILL FLY to India again starting next year after abandoning the route for more than half a century, its top official said.

The flag carrier, which has been reviving routes that are becoming viable again, is also preparing to launch flights to Los Angeles in the United States from Cebu by late 2006, according to PAL president Jaime Bautista.

The country's largest carrier will launch its four-times-a-week flights to Beijing on Nov. 11, 16 years after it stopped servicing the Chinese capital.

PAL, Asia's oldest carrier, used to fly to India but stopped serving the route in 1954 when then President Magsaysay issued a policy to stop foreign flights in favor of a rural development program.

The Cebu-Los Angeles flights would likely be thrice a week, Bautista said.

Frequency of the flights to India was still under study, he said, noting the improving traffic going to the densely populated East Asian economy.

A recently updated Philippine-India aviation deal, the first after 56 years, gave carriers of both countries daily flights in any of four major cities each plus a right to drop and pick up passengers to and from a middle ground.

PAL EYES/ B3

TEVES ANSWERS CRITICS

VAT impact on poor minimal

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE SAID THE newly implemented VAT Reform Law would have less impact on poor families than on the rich, citing its study showing that the poorest 50 percent of families will shoulder a measly 17 percent of the expected additional revenues from the tax measure.

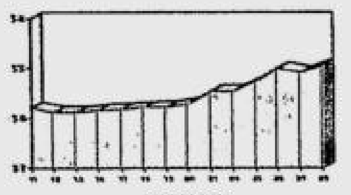
The upper 50 percent of Filipino families will be the ones to shoulder the bulk—or 83 percent—of the expected revenues from the VAT.

Contrary to comments that the VAT was anti-poor, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said revenues from the tax measure would be used for education and basic services for the poor. He added the fact that those earning more would shoulder the bulk of the revenue projections from the VAT made the tax mea-

VAT IMPACT/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 54.94 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 28, 2005

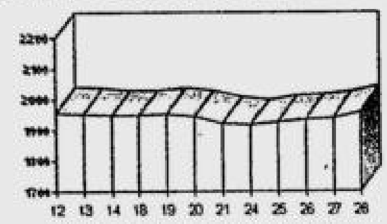
¥ 115.18 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 28, 2005

GOLD: $474.10-474.60

per ounce Hong Kong, Oct. 28, 2005

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B5)

Trading resumes today

STOCK TRADING RESUMED TODAY AFTER a long weekend with activity expected to be sluggish and volumes very thin.

The government had declared Oct. 31 and Nov. 4 as non-working holidays. Nov. 1

TRADING/ B3

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Loan Term	72 months
Interest Rate (APS**)	48.31%
Monthly Payment	P9,823.00

*The price of the Honda City is as of October 2005 and may change without prior notice.
**Advance Payment Scheme, where the first monthly payment is paid upon booking of the loan.

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US firm opens RP products catalogs

By R. Domingo

AN AMERICAN DIrect-to-consumer export service and Internet firm has launched three catalogs of Philippine products in a bid to put up a $100-million retail business within the next five years, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

Fernando Cala II, director of the DTI's Bureau of Export Trade Promotion, said greenMango's venture would facilitate the sale and promotion of Philippine-made products in the mainstream US market.

GreenMango's product range focuses on furniture, giftware, holiday decors and houseware. The firm's pioneering venture is the first direct marketing channel for Philippine products in the US, Cala said.

"Our options should not be limited to traditional strategies, channels of distributions and promotions," he said.

"This effort is a joint-owned partnership of Philippine manufacturers and the US management team who conceived the business model," he added.

For the initial title of a total of three catalogs, greenMango has distributed 315,000 copies in September. An additional 700,000 copies were expected to have been mailed in last month.

5 companies make it to PSE list of blue chips

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FIVE COMPANIES MADE IT TO THE Philippine Stock Exchange's prestigious list of blue chips under the PSE composite index (Phisix), the main barometer of stock market activity, PSE president Francis Lim said.

Lim said that after a review of the composition of the Phisix based on market capital, a new set of companies would be included in the blue-chip index beginning Dec. 1.

The PSE last conducted a review of the Phisix's composition in 2001 when it adopted a less stringent set of standards due to the then sluggish activity in the market.

The additions to the 30-company index in December include two companies of mall magnate Henry Sy—Banco De Oro Universal Bank, SM Investments Corp. (SMIC)—Ayala-led utility firm Manila Water Co. (MWC), Pilipino Telephone Corp. and Philex Mining Corp.

Dropped from the list were liquor firm Ginebra San Miguel Inc., electronics maker Ionics Circuits inc., holding firm JG Summit Holdings Inc., semiconductors firm Music Corp. and semi-government Philippine National Bank.

To be part of the Phisix, listed companies should meet the following criteria: Liquidity or the average daily value of peso trades of not less than P5 million; tradability or being traded 95 percent of the total trading days within the period covered and market capitalization or the ranking of the company based on the value of its outstanding or issued shares at the prevailing market prices.

But even as the PSE is set to release a new index composition in December, blue-chip firms shouldn't rest on their laurels, Lim said.

Beginning April 2006, the PSE is changing the criteria in selecting the companies for its blue-chip list. It is, for one, shifting to "free float market capitalization."

This, he said, is aimed at encouraging more companies to increase their "free float" or the number of shares offered to the public.

The new selection scheme, which will take effect on the first trading day of April, is based on five standards: free float level of at least 10 percent of total issued shares; liquidity or the average daily trading value of at least P5 million; tradability; volume turnover ratio and free float market capitalization or the number of shares available to the public valued at the prevailing market price.

Exchanges using the free float scheme include those in Hong Kong, New York, Canada, Japan, Singapore and Germany.

Lim explained the PSE was adopting this standard to be at par with international stock market standards.

Lim also said the PSE would conduct a review of the index composition every six months.

Lim added that a number of investors who park their money in mutual funds tracked the Phisix since most of their funds were invested in blue-chip stocks.

SUGARLAND FOR DISTRIBUTION

Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser C. Pangandaman inspects a 451-ha sugar plantation owned by the family of former Negros Rep. Jules Ledesma which was voluntarily offered for sale under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. The property, located in Barangay Punao, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental, will be distributed to qualified farmers next year. With Pangandaman are DAR Regional Director Alexis Arsenal, San Julio Realty VP Mariano Antonio E. Qui, and DAR Director for Land Acquisition Gloria Fabia.

Atlas subsidiary raising funds via public offering

By Christine A. Gaylican

ATLAS CONSOLIDATED MINING AND DEvelopment Corp.'s subsidiary, Carmen Copper Corp., has tapped Macquarie Securities as financial adviser for its planned local and international public offering this year.

The offering will allow the company to raise at least $170 million to be used for the operations of its Toledo copper mine in Cebu City, said Atlas Consolidated Corp. executive vice president and chief finance officer Martin C. Buckingham in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

"We have been advised to pursue the IPO at the soonest possible time," noted Buckingham.

He said listing at this time might work well for the company considering the high copper prices in the international markets. Copper now fetches $1.80 per pound.

The Toledo copper mine is said to have mineral reserves of 873 million tons, with a grade of 0.41 percent copper, and an appraised value of $3 billion.

He said Atlas would soon disclose the details of the planned domestic and international offering.

The mining firm has also picked Cutfield Freeman & Co. to assist the mining firm in selecting its smelter-partner for a possible off-take arrangement for the copper it would produce.

"The smelter firm will procure all of Toledo's copper output in exchange for equity," explained Buckingham.

The mine's reopening through "a combination of copper concentrate off-take agreements and equity placements will put back the Atlas Toledo mines back in business after a 10-year closure," he said.

OFWs seen as a strong market for 3G phones

By Clarissa S. Batino

IT WOULD TAKE TIME BEFORE THE NEW mobile phone technology called 3G could gain mass market following in the Philippines as huge as that generated by the current system, but it would definitely come, according to network experts of Finnish supplier Nokia.

Christian Fredrikson, Nokia vice president for networks, said that once the price of 3G handsets become more affordable, this technology had a better chance of penetrating the Philippine market.

"It will be quite a while before 3G becomes dominant. The current 2G network will stay for a long time and the overlap (of 2G and 3G) will happen for quite a while," said Fredrikson. The 3G technology suits subscribers who often use their cellular phones to call rather than send and receive text messages.

The Philippines has more than 36 million cellular phone subscribers.

Tapani Sairanen, Nokia Phils. country director for networks, said mobile phone operators were worried that customer take-up might slow down once market penetration reached 55 percent.

Eventually, operators will really have to go into 3G.

Fredrikson said the more than eight million Filipinos working overseas could provide a strong take-off point for 3G as it would allow them and their families to see each other while talking on the phone.

The National Telecommunications Commission will award five 3G frequencies by the end of the year to operators that are most qualified to make the investment.

NTC Chair Ronald Solis said the commission had received applications for 3G license from existing licensed mobile players such as Globe Telecom Inc., Smart Communications Inc., Digitel Mobile Phils. Inc. and Bayan Telecommunications Inc.

It also received applications from Next Mobile Inc. of Mel Velarde, Connectivity Unlimited Resources Inc. of Roberto Ongpin, AZ Communications Network Inc. linked to Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco and Multimedia Telephony Inc. linked to Enrique Razon.

The 3G network will allow wireless subscribers to make full-motion and real-time video calls. It would also enable them to download content faster. But 3G is a technology that is expected to appeal to a market heavy on voice calls, which the Philippines, up to now, is not

SMC dairy unit eyes A$850M in foreign loans

NATIONAL FOODS LTD., THE AUSTRALIAN dairy unit of food and beverage firm San Miguel Corp. (SMC), is seeking approval from a number of foreign banks to borrow at least A$850 million to refinance part of a bridge loan SMC used to acquire the dairy giant and fund potential investments in the region by the San Miguel Group, informed sources told the INQUIRER.

Sources said National Foods is finalizing terms to secure new debt to refinance a portion of San Miguel's $1.5-billion bridge loan.

Separately, UBS Investment Research reported that San Miguel's $1.5 billion bridge finance facility used to acquire National Foods is being refinanced with cheaper debt priced at 90 to 120 basis points over the London Inter Bank Offered Rate.

The loan will be taken out by National Foods.

San Miguel earlier secured a loan facility of up to $650 million to partly refinance the bridge loan. It has yet to draw down on the funds.

National Foods' new loan may be used for potential investments.

UBS also wrote in its report that logistics and distribution networks of both National Foods and another San Miguel unit, juice maker Berri Ltd., are already being integrated.

It said San Miguel management expects smooth integration between the two firms. Berri's management is reportedly familiar with National Food's operations, with Berri having sold one of its business lines to National Foods in prior years, UBS noted.

"Organizational restructuring and operational integration within National Foods and Berri Ltd. are underway, and we believe this will be a key driver of future earnings," it said. "Bridge loans used for the investments are being refinanced by cheap US dollar and Australian dollar debts."

UBS also expects a merger between National Foods and Berri after San Miguel announced it will acquire the remaining 49 percent it does not yet own in Berri.

San Miguel controls 51 percent of Berri.

The takeover of National Foods, valued at A$1.9 billion ($1.5 billion), is SMC's largest investment this year which will further cement its hold over the fast-growing Asia-Pacific food and beverage market.

San Miguel earlier confirmed it was acquiring the remaining 49 percent in Berri, resulting in a potential takeover.

San Miguel has the option to purchase the outstanding 49 percent in Berri in January 2006.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 28, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31	31	30.5	31	357,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	51.5	52.5	51	52	1,522,500
China Banking Corp.	610	610	610	610	600
Citystate Savings Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.55	0.57	0.55	0.57	1,120,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	48	48	47.5	48	199,300
International Exch. Bank	19	19	19	19	211,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	27	26	26	422,000
Philippine National Bank	30	30	30	30	1,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	1,000
Security Bank Corp.	30.5	31	30.5	31	25,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	1,300
Manulife Financial Corp.	2825	2825	2825	2825	760
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	9,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	145	145	145	145	20
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2000	2010	2000	2010	1,750
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	15,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.89	0.89	1,340,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	705	710	705	705	6,200
Ipeople Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	50,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	5,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.047	0.049	0.047	0.049	200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.85	2.9	2.85	2.9	1,123,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1660	1680	1660	1675	240,220
Ivantage Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.57	1,650,000
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.016	11,600,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	1,900
Manila Electric Co. B	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	111,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.4	1,280,000
Petron Corp.	3.35	3.4	3.35	3.4	1,079,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.97	0.99	0.97	0.99	90,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.3	9.5	9.3	9.4	511,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.66	0.66	140,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.22	29,041,000.
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.54	1,510,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.55	3.6	3.55	3.55	1,374,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	35.5	36.5	35.5	36.5	159,400
RFM Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	40,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64	65	64	65	16,000
San Miguel Corp. B	89	90	89	90	224,100
Universal Robina Corp.	16	16	15.75	15.75	5,200
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,490,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	287.5	290	287.5	290	95,570
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.95	5	4.95	4.95	2,025,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	2,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.12	2.12	873,000
APC Group Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.79	0.79	170,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.97	1,900,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	350,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.245	940,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3	3.05	200,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	880,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	42.5	43	42.5	42.5	274,200
House Of Investments Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.78	0.78	3,560,000
Ionics Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	66,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.95	4	3.95	4	1,845,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.38	1.4	1,138,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	8,410,000
Paxys Inc.	5.1	5.1	5	5	64,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.215	0.19	0.215	120,000
SM Investments Corp.	220	229	220	227	451,060
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	60,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	2,500,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	5,630,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.115	0.125	0.115	0.125	680,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.7	4	3.7	3.7	39,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	90,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Bella Corp.	0.89	0.9	0.89	0.9	510,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	1,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.75	0.75	100,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.42	1.44	1.42	1.44	275,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	30,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	300,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	89,100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	26,000
Far Eastern University	610	610	610	610	400
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.8	8.9	8.8	8.9	4,735,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	8,800,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	160,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	1,120,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.3	2,349,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.21	0.195	0.21	230,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	800,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5.8	5.9	5.7	5.9	307,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	20,000
SM Development Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	45,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.9	7.5	7.9	18,871,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	98,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	101,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	2,100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	2,360,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	196,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.023	7,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	8,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	560,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.24	1.24	1.2	1.22	7,089,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26	26	25.5	25.5	116,700
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	20,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	6,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	160,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	500,000

CURRENCIES

November 1, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.823791	1.000000	55.0600
Japan	Yen	0.007137	0.008663	0.4770
United Kingdom	Pound	1.469231	1.783500	98.1995
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106241	0.128966	7.1009
Switzerland	Franc	0.646770	0.785114	43.2284
Canada	Dollar	0.702714	0.853024	46.9675
Singapore	Dollar	0.488086	0.592487	32.6223
Australia	Dollar	0.623753	0.757174	41.6900
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.185180	2.652590	146.0516
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.219666	0.266652	14.6819
Brunei	Dollar	0.486644	0.590737	32.5260
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000100	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.020221	0.024546	1.3515
UAE	Dirham	0.224308	0.272287	14.9921
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.213900	66.8373
Argentina	Peso	0.273004	0.331400	18.2469
Brazil	Real	0.360442	0.437541	24.0910
Denmark	Kroner	0.134048	0.162721	8.9594
India	Rupee	0.018331	0.022252	1.2252
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.218263	0.264950	14.5881
Mexico	New Peso	0.075619	0.091794	5.0542
New Zealand	Dollar	0.581527	0.705916	38.8677
South Africa	Rand	0.123322	0.149701	8.2425
Korea	Won	0.000792	0.000962	0.0530
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024499	0.029739	1.6374

VAT impact . . .

From page B1

sure progressive.

The government expects to generate P4 billion to P5 billion in incremental revenues from the VAT in the remaining months of the year, and some P80 billion annually starting next year.

Of the P80 billion in estimated incremental VAT revenues next year, the DOF said 30 percent would be allocated to increase spending for basic services and capital outlay.

The VAT law basically expanded the coverage of the impost to include oil and electricity, among others, and would increase the tax rate from 10 to 12 percent starting January 2006.

The DOF again reminded the public that many food items in the consumer basket of poor families, particularly agricultural products in their raw form, were exempted from the 10-percent VAT.

It added that most commodities have already been long subjected to the VAT, and therefore the implementation of the VAT did not mean that prices of all goods and services would go up by 10 percent.

The government agency said that should prices of food items increase, it would have to be very minimal because it would only factor in the increase in the cost of electricity and oil, which are just inputs.

It said that the cost of rice should increase by only 0.05 percent, while the price of corn should increase by only 0.03 percent. The price of bangus, chicken and pork should only rise 0.04 percent, 0.09 percent, and 0.19 percent, respectively.

The Department of Energy said the increase in the cost of electricity due to the implementation of the VAT should be 73 centavos a kilowatt-hour for households consuming between 200 and 999 kwh a month, and 85 centavos a kwh for those consuming more than 999 kwh of electricity a month.

The DOF prefers to call the new VAT law the "RVAT" rather than "E-VAT (expanded value added tax)," explaining that the first expansion of the VAT coverage in the late 1990s was the one appropriately called the E-VAT law.

Court stops Calatagan sale

BANCO FILIPINO HEIR ALBERT "BOBBY" Aguirre has been TRO'd from auctioning the Calatagan polo farm that the Supreme Court had earlier ordered the billionaire to return to the family of Bulacan Mayor Ricardo Silverio Sr.

Las Piñas Regional Trial Court Judge Bonifacio Sanz Maceda issued a temporary restraining order stopping an Aguirre company from auctioning last Monday the 62-hectare ranch.

The Aguirre company claims the auction was meant to satisfy a soured P400-million mortgage obtained by the Silverios, using the Calatagan ranch as a collateral.

But the Silverios claim that the alleged mortgage was fictitious, with Silverio's son, Ricardo Jr., surreptitiously pledging the Calatagan farm by falsifying his father's signature—in exchange for a P60-million loan from Aguirre—when the elder Silverio, the real owner, was abroad in 1996.

According to the grapevine, the Silverio patriarch had offered Aguirre to repay the loan, but the banker-polo player instead offered the politician P50 million in cash to drop the entire claim.

The Silverios then initiated a series of suits to win back the ranch, which the patriarch acquired from the Zobels in the 1960s through a trucks-swap when the elder Silverio was still trying to build the relatively unknown Toyota dealership.

Aguirre, incidentally, paid almost P8 million in filing fees to initiate the foreclosure sale, in an apparent effort to beat the Supreme Court ruling to transfer physical possession of the Calatagan ranch to two Silverio companies while another Batangas RTC court sorts out the multiple ownership lawsuits.

But with the TRO aborting the sale, and the possibility that the Las Piñas court converting the 20-day order into a preliminary injunction for the duration of another set of lawsuits, Aguirre, whose donations have even reached the British royalty, has effectively contributed P8 million this time to a cause closer to home, the judiciary development fund.

(Disclosure: Banco Filipino has filed a P3-billion libel suit against Cocktales and top INQUIRER officials. The bank is also fighting attempts for it to pay the estimated P45 million in filing fees for the P3-billion damage claim.)

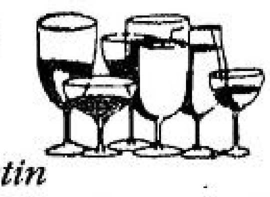
Seminary turned SM

FROM religious calling to business calling.

The SM Karuhatan branch that opened on Friday is being leased from Saint Vincent's Seminary, which transferred the religious house to a less congested site decades ago when MacArthur Highway started getting traffic-choked.

Before SM, the 2.5-hectare property had been leased and converted into a warehouse by San Miguel Corp., which owns the nearby Polo brewery.

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

Like any typical SM opening, thousands of shoppers rushed inside the spanking new mall when gates opened at 10 a.m. Friday that SM heir Hans Sy had to order a momentary stop to the escalators after several kids stumbled in their excitement.

Except for a brief scare, the neighborhood kids bounced right back into their wild-eyed discovery tour, accompanied by similarly excited parents.

The commercial marvel is that, despite the lumpen proletariat looks of the shoppers, the well-stocked supermarket did a roaring trade even during the first, normally slow hour that an extra platoon of cashiers had to be mobilized to man every point-of-sale terminal.

Sy said the trick was that within 30 minutes of every opening, a live entertainment show must start in order to hook the initial flood of onlookers to linger and, hopefully, start opening their wallets, "even just for soft drinks and snacks."

Judging from the lines at the game and even the karaoke shops, the masses have indeed found a new opiate.

Money-go-round

- TO THOSE who have not been to Cubao in a long time, the Sampaguita theater in the Araneta Commercial Center has been turned into a candy-colored Eurotel, a branch of a similarly named boutique hotel in Las Piñas catering to budget-conscious travelers.
- AND speaking of budget hotels, the Makati Cinema Square vicinity has seen a mushrooming of small inns targeting mostly local travelers, *balikbayans* and OFWs who cannot afford the Legaspi Village/Ayala Center accommodations. The latest addition is the Japanese-sounding NTT Pension on J. Victor Street.
- WHOOPS, we goofed. Fully Booked, the Rockwell bookstore that this space reported Friday as scouting for a second branch, has already opened a second branch in Greenhills.

Heard through the grapevine

UPON the motion of Banco de Oro for early resolution, the Supreme Court has cancelled the Nov. 8 oral arguments for the sale of the SSS block in Equitable PCI Bank. The urgency came in the wake of the Monetary Board resolution giving Equitable PCIBank 30 days to dispose of the contested 11-percent treasury shares.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Foreign investments seen hitting $2.6B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS sees net foreign investments in local stocks, debt paper and bank products hitting $2.6 billion by year's end, dwarfing the $500 million in "hot money" inflows in 2004.

The strong influx of foreign portfolio investments—also called "hot money" due to their volatile nature—is projected to be sustained next year to reach $2.8 billion given the government's improving fiscal situation and declining political uncertainties, BSP documents showed.

These projections, which took into account the emerging scenario as of October, represented an upgrade from original expectations. They supported the BSP's forecast of a $900-million balance-of-payments surplus for this year and next.

Based on the previous assessment made in November 2004, net portfolio inflows this year were projected at only $1.6 billion, rising to $2 billion in 2006.

"I think investors find Philippine assets still attractive," said BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr.

BSP says local assets remain attractive

"Looking at the trend in portfolio investments for instance—investments that go to the stock, fixed income and money markets—we've seen over $2 billion in net inflows so far this year (January to September) so we continue to attract investors for peso-denominated assets," he said.

From January to Oct. 21 this year, the country has raked in $2.06 billion in net foreign portfolio investments.

Tetangco said the country's economic picture was improving especially since the Supreme Court had paved the way for the implementation of the expanded value-added tax, a key component of the government's fiscal consolidation program.

But the BSP chief admitted the country would have to maintain a comfortable differential in terms of interest rates versus offshore markets to preserve the attractiveness of peso assets.

"We have to be watchful of the impact of the narrowing interest rate differentials. We have a fairly open foreign exchange system so investors can easily shift from peso to dollar. Interest rate differential is definitely an important consideration for them and we continue to watch that," he said.

Joey Cuyegkeng, an economist at ING Bank, said the government's higher inflation forecast for 2007 implied further moderate tightening by the central bank which, in turn, would be good for local banks.

"Aside from the expected massive overseas Filipino workers' remittances this coming Christmas season of possibly around $1 billion each in November and December, the central bank's tightening bias may also attract portfolio money or keep the already $2 billion in hot money in the country," he said

PAL eyes flights to India, LA

From page B1

In both routes to be launched in 2006, PAL will exercise a fifth freedom aviation right permitted by the bilateral deals forged by the Philippine government with the United States and India.

PAL is planning to stop, unload and pick up passengers in Seoul, Korea, in its Cebu-Los Angeles flights. In the Manila-India flight, the plan is to stop in Bangkok, Thailand, and exercise fifth freedom as well.

"The flight to India may take off by the middle of 2006 while the Cebu-LA would be around the third quarter," Bautista said.

Bautista said the US route has remained the most profitable among PAL's overseas destinations. In terms of volume, Hong Kong is the carrier's biggest market.

New routes and expansion of existing ones were also being considered, according to the PAL chief.

Trading resumes . . .

From page B1

was also a regular holiday as the country observes All Saints' Day. Trading this week will be held today and tomorrow.

Online broker 2TradeAsia.Com said in a weekly report that the market seemed more energetic last week with trades hitting P1 billion.

AB Capital Securities said in its weekly report that the market managed to post four consecutive days of gains last week. The main-index jumped 38 points or 2 percent to end the week at 1,960.22.

AB Capital said that third-quarter profit reports might take the limelight this week along with the implementation starting Nov. 1 of the expanded value-added tax, a key measure that is seen to ease the country's severe fiscal problem.

"Investors should go through the profit reports, keeping an eye also on the companies' outlook. Any comments companies make on costs and pricing should be closely watched," AB Capital Securities said.

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UNILAB
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM

UNILAB GETS PRC ACCREDITATION
United Laboratories Inc. (Unilab) became the first in the country to have been accredited by the Board of Pharmacy (BOP) and Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) for its training program for professional service representatives (PSRs), also known as medical representatives (medreps). Unilab president and CEO Carlos C. Ejercito (right) receives the certificate of accreditation for Unilab during the awarding rites at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel. Witnessing the award are: (from left) Unilab corporate vice president for ethical marketing Manolito Co, BOP board member Rey Umali, BOP chair Catalina Sanchez and BOP board member Jenny Flores.

13 firms seen vying for 112-MW hydro plants

By Abigail L. Ho

AT LEAST 13 FOREIGN AND LOCAL FIRMS are expected to bid for the 112-megawatt (MW) Pantabangan-Masiway hydro power plants of National Power Corp.

An industry source said one of these prospective bidders was Kepco Philippines Inc., the country's second biggest independent power producer.

The IPP's interest in the plant, the source said, was proven by its participation in the pre-bid conference held in mid-October.

Another IPP, CalEnergy International Ltd., had earlier expressed its intention to join the auction for the asset package.

Interested investors can conduct a due-diligence audit on the Pantabangan-Masiway assets from Oct. 3 to Nov. 25.

According to the timetable of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), the first bidding round for the Pantabangan-Masiway assets will take place within the month.

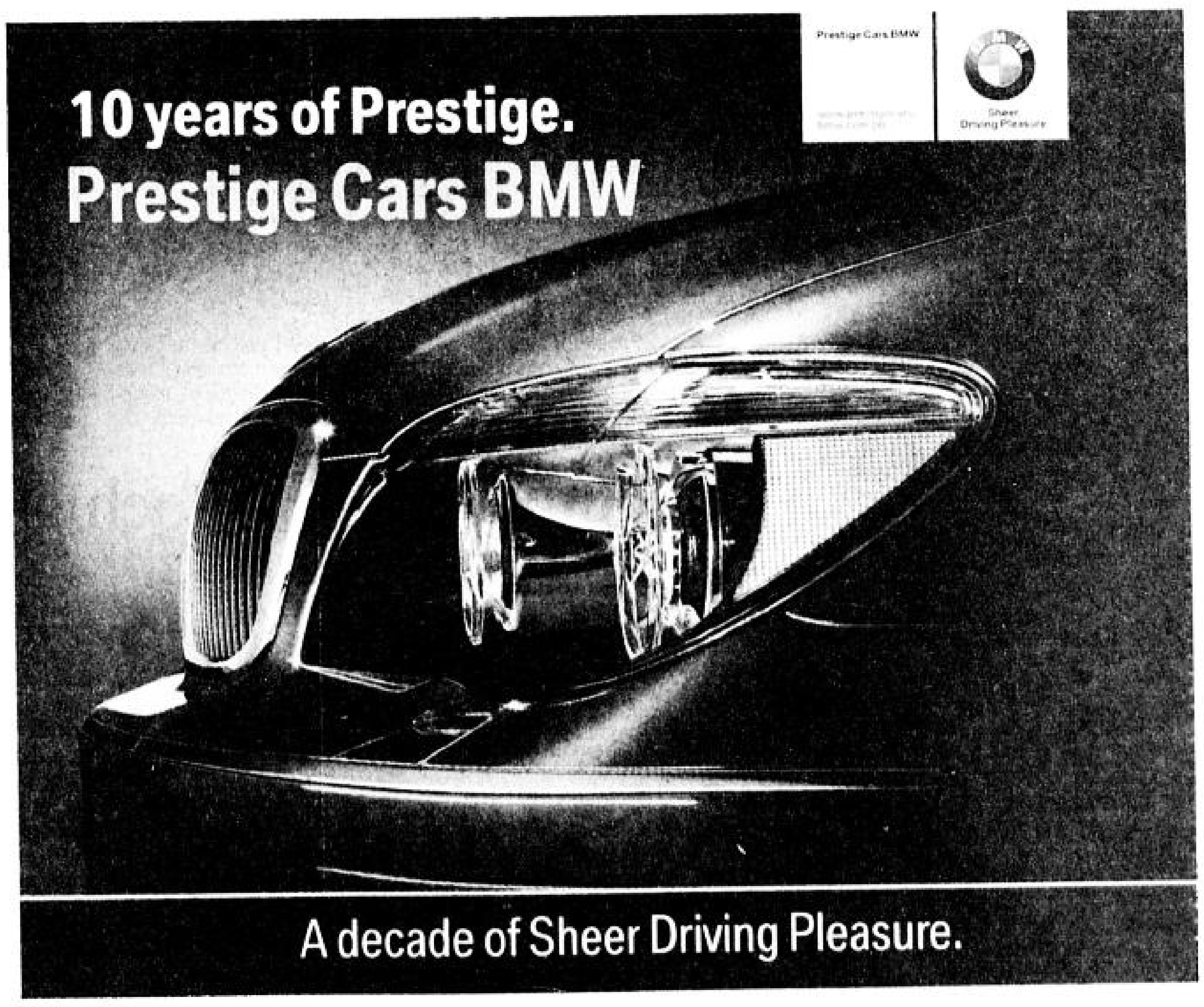
Another hydro asset that PSALM has opened for bidding is the 360-MW Magat plant. Due-diligence audit on this particular asset can be conducted from Oct. 10 to Dec. 12.

Even with only two months left in the year, PSALM aims to sell nine more Napocor power plants instead of the earlier four assets it planned to bid out.

PSALM president Nieves Osorio said in an earlier presentation that assets to be auctioned off within the year included the decommissioned 225-MW Bataan thermal power plant, the 600-MW Calaca coal-fired power facility and the decommissioned 200-MW Manila thermal power plant.

Other plants that would be placed on the auction block before end-2005 included the 660-MW Tiwi-Makban and 150-MW Bacon-Manito geothermal facilities and the decommissioned 54-MW Cebu II diesel plant and 104-MW Aplaya plant.

PSALM has so far sold six Napocor plants—five hydroelectric and a coal-fired. These are the 3.5-MW Talomo plant in Davao for $1.37 million, the 1.6-MW Agusan plant in Bukidnon for $1.53 million, the 1.8-MW Barit facility in Camarines Sur for $480,000, the 0.4-MW Cawayan plant in Sorsogon for $410,410, the 1.2-MW Loboc plant in Bohol for $1.42 million, and the 600-MW Masinloc coal-fired complex for $561.74 million.



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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Tokyo motor show public opening's crowd drawer

By Tessa R. Salazar

MITSUBISHI Concept X draws crowd at the Tokyo Motor Show.

A NATURAL ENTHUSIAST-MAGNET at the 39th Tokyo Motor Show when it opened to the public on Oct. 21 was the Mitsubishi Concept X show car. Its designers flaunted the new-age Evolution design at the Makuhari Messe Convention Center at the Chiba Prefecture, as the public feasted its eyes on cars envisioned to roam the streets three years from now and beyond.

Several Japanese children ogled at the red concept car with their parents, as showroom staff explained one of the car's most prominent features, an oversized grille. Its front visage borrowed design cues from a jet fighter. The model, they say, hints broadly at the huge quantities of air it draws in and at the car's road-hugging stability.

Seven-year-old Yo attempted to touch the three-diamond logo in front of the engine hood as this writer talked with the boy's father, in halting English. Designers explained a significant increase in body stiffness with the ring-structure frame design.

Weight reduction

They also said future owners should expect a reduction of weight in the engine hood, trunk lid, fenders, roof and front– and rear–door panels, as the designers made use of aluminum.

Mitsubishi concentrated its weight reduction efforts on the roof and upper parts of the body to lower the vehicle's center of gravity. On the other hand, the weight of the doors, engine hood, trunk and other peripheral elements were reduced to better control forces of inertia for better stability.

Strongest draw

For car enthusiasts, the Concept X's strongest draw was its turbocharged aluminum cylinder block Mivec engine mated to a high-performance 6-speed auto-manual transmission.

The concept model also features the four-wheel-drive-based Super All Wheel Control vehicle dynamics control system. It has a two-liter four-cylinder DOHC Mivec intercooler-turbocharged engine, with a clutch-less six-speed auto-manual transmission (equipped with paddle shifters on the steering wheel) for slicker shifting and higher transmission efficiency compared to regular manual gearboxes.

Ecology and Emotion at the Tokyo Motor Show

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

IS IT POSSIBLE TO PROMOTE ecology and at the same time evoke emotion via an exhibit in a car show? Yes, if the exhibitor is the world's second largest automaker with an unsurpassed track record of producing vehicles that simultaneously achieve earth-friendly Ecology and fun-to-drive Emotion.

The fact that Toyota chose to carry over its "Ecology & Emotion" theme from the previous Tokyo Motor Show to the one ongoing (until Sunday, Nov. 6) reflects Toyota president Katsuaki Watanabe's credo: that the mission of the automobile industry is to develop automobiles that are good for both people and the world as a whole, that there can be no growth in automobile markets without enough consideration for safety and the environment.

However, this is not to say that Toyota, with its deep sense of social responsibility, only aims to make cars that are eco-friendly and ultra-safe. Japan's biggest car manufacturer gives equal value to creating vehicles that provide plenty of driving excitement and user-friendly convenience. It is the passionate pursuit of both goals that Toyota showcased at the 39th motor show's centerpiece/largest exhibit occupying a whopping 4,400 square meters of the Center Hall of Makuhari Messe's International Convention Complex.

Harmony

The seven concept cars and 16 production vehicles that Toyota displayed show how far Toyota has come in designing cars and developing technology that would create a world where all of life can coexist in harmony. Last week, this column featured the revolutionary Prius, whose gasoline-electric Hybrid Synergy Drive has been improved in the car's second generation for a more powerful, smoother and safer driving performance. Toyota claims that the new Prius gets 35.5 km per liter, more than twice that of a 1.5-liter Corolla, while complying with Japan's most stringent Ultra-Low Emissions Level regulations. Since the Prius' hybrid system recharges itself, it never needs plugging in.

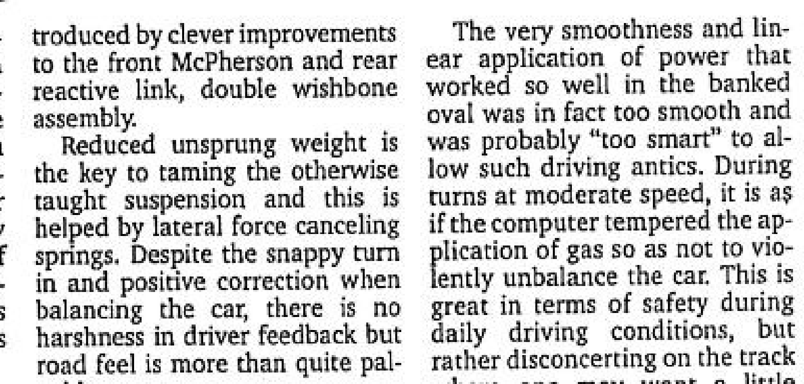
Of the seven concept cars in Toyota's pavilion, the one that most impressed me was the futuristic Fine-X (Ecology) which "zeronizes" the negative aspects of vehicles on the environment and maximizes the positive aspects such as driving pleasure and comfort. In terms of Emotion, the LF-A V10 concept two-seater sports car in the Lexus section was the most appealing.

Running on nonpolluting hydrogen that reacts with oxygen from the air to create electricity and water vapor, its only exhaust emission, the fuel cell hybrid Fine-X provides a glimpse of the automobile's future. To help slow global warming and move faster toward a sustainable recycling-oriented society based on environmental compatibility, many of the Fine-X's furnishings are made from biodegradable plant sources.

Minimizing

Aside from minimizing the environmental burden of cars, the Fine-X reduces the risk of traffic accidents with peripheral-monitoring technology. Cameras and a large display extend visibility to areas around the car that the driver cannot normally see, thereby alerting him to potential hazards and increasing driving safety.

ECOLOGY/B5



EMOTION: The Lexus LF-A V10 concept sports car

Driving by Mt. Fuji

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

THE FUJI SPEEDWAY IS A LITTLE-known wonder to many Filipino car buffs as well as racing aficionados.

Woe to them. I've been to that place twice already.

Nestled at the foot of Mt. Fuji, the most majestic mountain in Japan that is a spitting image of our own Mayon Volcano, the Fuji Speedway is recognized worldwide as a leading circuit in the Land of the Rising Sun. The place is some two hours or so away by bus from Tokyo.

I was there again some two weeks ago after first visiting it in 2001, again through the courtesy of TMP's Nobuharu Tabata.

The trip there was part of my recent coverage of the 39th Tokyo Motor Show—a major journey crafted as usual by Danny Isla and Ariel de Jesus, TMP's feisty pair that's why they're known in the automotive industry as the Deadly Duo of Toyota.

While at the Fuji Speedway, I had a thrilling experience of driving a superb Toyota car at "Mobilitas (pronounced Mobilita)," a course adjacent to the Fuji Speedway.

The drive was to test your skills on a winding, low-friction course, with the course drenched to the bone by sprinklers spouting water endlessly.

It required you to race the car at high speed and apply a full brake at a certain point at a very wet area, inducing the vehicle to spin out of control in a bid to test your ability to control the car in a time of perceived panic.

But I never panicked, though.

The drive included features of experiencing ABS (Anti-lock Brake System) and VSC (Vehicle Stability Control), both safety technologies that Toyota is proud of.

In the first run, the ABS and VSC had been switched off and braking at full speed could cause the car to spin out of control. It did spin but, luckily, not fully as I managed to control the car. My Japanese navigator applauded (ahem!).

In the second run and with the ABS and VSC switched on, the car had been tamed as a domesticated cat after I had fully applied the brake in high speed, forcing the vehicle to come to a complete stop in a very "obedient" manner. Lorie Cabanes of the Bulletin, my navigator, flashed his toothy smile and said, "Perfect, podner!"

I also got applause from my fellow journalists that included Tito Hermoso of C! Magazine, who said: "My, I thought I saw a Formula One driver while I was watching you drive, podner!" Brian Afuang of the Manila Times could only applaud (ahem!).

The "Mobilitas" is proud of its three themes: promotion of motor sports, promotion of safe driving and dissemination of information to the young.

From the "Mobilitas," we were brought to the Fuji Speedway, where we watched stock cars zoom around, literally burning tires, at the famed circuit that was opened 40 years ago and was bought and remodeled to state-of-the-art standards recently by Toyota.

But the big thrill at the Fuji Speedway was the "Drifting" race, a relatively new motor sport that requires cars to slide and "drift" in a sharp curve. It's now catching the imagination of America's racing buffs.

Needless to say, it was an experience worth remembering.

* * *

NLEX NOTES: You may not be aware of it, but the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) has become the gateway to tourist destinations up North. You spend easily P70,000 for ticket/hotel for two to Hong Kong, but alas, you won't spend that much going to places like Clark and Subic, Baguio or any of the beautiful beach resorts in Pangasinan and La Union. So, if I were you, take heed. Visit your country first before going abroad. The NLEX has become your ally as a tourist going up North.

* * *

QUOTE ME: Drive fast and you are hospital-bound. Drive safely and you are homeward-bound.

Honda Civic at Tochigi proving ground

(Second of three parts)

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

ANY SEARCH FOR A VEHICLE'S true dynamics will often lead to situations that come close and sometimes step beyond the edge of safety. Pushing the physical and legal limits take equal amount of skill and foolishness as it is neither safe nor logical to attempt to overwhelm a vehicle's dynamics in normal daily driving conditions.

The best place to do so is in a controlled environment and such a setting is also found at the Honda R&D facility. Last week's installment talked about the car's performance in the high-speed environment of a banked oval track but the real essence of the new Civic revealed itself in the twisty, rain-soaked surfaces of the Tochigi proving ground's winding course infield.

Designed to push test vehicles to the limits of their ability to hold lateral g-forces, the track consists of four connected parabolas that change both in direction and severity of tightness. A second section of the track was closed for safety reasons and this consisted of a long sweeping run-up into a severe, twin apex, blind U-turn amid tall green flora. It would have been fantastic to be able to drive through this short section of "green hell" but the worsening typhoon conditions prevented its use.

Driver interface

While many will begin to talk of suspension, tires and weight distribution when discussing handling and turning performance, it is essential that a vehicle's even more basic systems are fundamentally sound. Driver interface plays a major role in a car's performance as superior designs allow men to maximize their machines.

At the heart of the Civic's human interface is a cutting-edge instrument panel mated to ergonomic and intuitive controls. Information is relayed to the driver with Honda's new Multiplex Meter system, a two-tiered display that allows the best possible prioritization of data. Essential information, like speed and fuel, is placed directly in the driver's point of view, while secondary information, like the tachometer and engaged gear, is just a short glance away.

Good seating position is available to various shapes and sizes of driver because of the wide range of adjustability of the seating, steering wheel and even the center armrest. Driver-oriented controls are highlighted by a substantial, sporty steering wheel, a compact shift lever and horizontal Z-shaped handbrake. The front seats are slightly larger than before, with both wider, adjustable back rests and deeper side bolsters. One feels firmly planted when at the controls of the new Civic—a good thing considering the amount of lateral g's the car displayed at Tochigi's winding course.

Highly rigid body

The first very noticeable characteristic of the vehicle is the highly rigid body that is claimed to be 35 percent firmer than the previous model. This translates into a very economic use of momentum especially when attempting to track a tightening line at the winding course. While people may imagine that such a rigid chassis will imbibe more than a little roughness into the vehicle's ride, smoothness is introduced by clever improvements to the front McPherson and rear reactive link, double wishbone assembly.

Reduced unsprung weight is the key to taming the otherwise taught suspension and this is helped by lateral force canceling springs. Despite the snappy turn in and positive correction when balancing the car, there is no harshness in driver feedback but road feel is more than quite palpable.

Lots of fun

At the track, the whole package was suitable enough to have lots of fun, but the DBW (drive by wire) throttle didn't shine as well as in the previous high speed oval exercise. The electronically actuated system did not display the typical response and feedback of cable type throttle controls, especially when one wanted to get a little steering control with the gas pedal.

The very smoothness and linear application of power that worked so well in the banked oval was in fact too smooth and was probably "too smart" to allow such driving antics. During turns at moderate speed, it is as if the computer tempered the application of gas so as not to violently unbalance the car. This is great in terms of safety during daily driving conditions, but rather disconcerting on the track where one may want a little more turn-in oversteer or slide-out understeer as the case may be.

All in all, the new chassis feels like it has gone beyond the 7th generation's vagueness and is returning to some of the roots that have made the Civic's name and reputation. One can say that this new car is channeling the spirit of previous generations that were popular because of the engaging drive and spirit of "bang for buck" performance.

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WITH DMFC SYSTEM, Yamaha is able to come out with a lightweight hydrogen-powered scooter.

Future look of motor bikes featured at Tokyo Motor Show

By Charles E. Buban

WHILE MOST OF the motoring media had their attention drawn to the latest and future car models and technologies at the recent 39th Tokyo Motor Show, some of them—including myself—couldn't help but visit the North Hall of Makuhari Messe (the show's venue located on the outskirts of Tokyo) where motor bikes were on display.

All sorts of two-wheelers—from concept bikes, fuel cell bikes, racing bikes to scooters—are exhibited there as part of this year's presentation that runs until Nov. 6.

The more interesting concepts presented include Yamaha's research into motor bikes that use alternative fuel, particularly their FC-me, a hydrogen-fuel-cell-powered concept scooter.

Support needed

"Any research into this technology should be supported. If zero emissions motor bikes are mass-produced and pollution-free motorcycles and scooters were to replace the polluting ones, this development would be a step in the right direction environmentally speaking," said Norberto Quisumbing Jr., founder and chair of Norkis Group, which markets Yamaha brand of motorcycles in the Philippines.

Since the FC-me's 69-kg frame is too light and small to accommodate a converter unit (to convert methanol into hydrogen), much more a compressed hydrogen gas tank—a common component of hydrogen fuel cell systems in cars—Yamaha instead developed the Direct Methanol Fuel Cell (DMFC) system that uses a liquid methanol-water mix as fuel.

A form of alcohol, methanol is another source of hydrogen, and is in fact used in several experimental fuel cell power packs that could power next-generation laptop computers.

Less components

Although the DMFC system would not be able to match the performance of a compressed hydrogen gas type of fuel cell, it requires less peripheral components that make the system a perfect match for scooters.

In fact, the DMFC system installed in the FC-me achieves an energy conversion efficiency that is 1.8 times better than a four-stroke, 50-cc gasoline engine motorcycle.

"This is not the first time Yamaha used the DMFC system in its experimental scooters," revealed Quisumbing.

Basis for comparison

Last year, Yamaha started road testing the FC-06 Proto, another experimental scooter that uses a similar DMFC system that would soon become the basis for improving the FC-me's performance.

Indeed, when all improvements were incorporated into the FC-me, it achieved an energy conversion rate that is 1.5 times better than the FC-06 Proto.

"It's unfortunate that the FC-me is still a concept but it will surely become the basis for the next generation of light motorized bikes," Quisumbing admitted.

Indeed last September, Yamaha has signed with the Shizuoka Prefecture government an agreement to put the FC-me on its roads for actual road test.

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Ecology and Emotion . . .

From page B4

The Fine-X maximizes comfort and convenience as when the gull wing doors open, the driver's seat rotates outward for you and once you are seated, the seat glides back into driving position *(see photo)*. Upon reaching your destination, the Fine-X's drive-by-wire steering system automatically stows away and the seat glides outward, enabling you to simply stand up to disembark.

Its independent four-wheel-drive system using in-wheel motors with independent steering allows the Fine-X to rotate on the spot and pivot from front to rear for unparalleled maneuverability and easier parking and U-turns. Since the major components are downsized and mounted low in the vehicle, cabin space is increased equivalent to that of a Camry. The resulting low center of gravity together with the aforementioned independent four-wheel steering control translates into a high level of driving performance and handling that is not possible in ordinary cars.

L-finesse

Speaking of ordinary cars, the Lexus LF-A is anything but one. A concept premium high-performance coupé, the LF-A with its simple but elegant and dynamic styling represents the new Lexus design philosophy of L-finesse uniting the seemingly contradictory elements of "Leading Edge" and "Finesse." The LF-A is powered by a newly developed high-output V10 engine which, together with the car's ultimate weight balance, exemplifies Lexus' world of passionate driving and motor sport enthusiasm.

Summing up, Toyota reaffirmed at the 39th Tokyo Motor Show its dream, as articulated by Mr. Tanabe, of creating "a car that makes the air cleaner the more it is driven, passengers healthier as they drive by reducing stress, and prevents accidents and injuries altogether."

* * *

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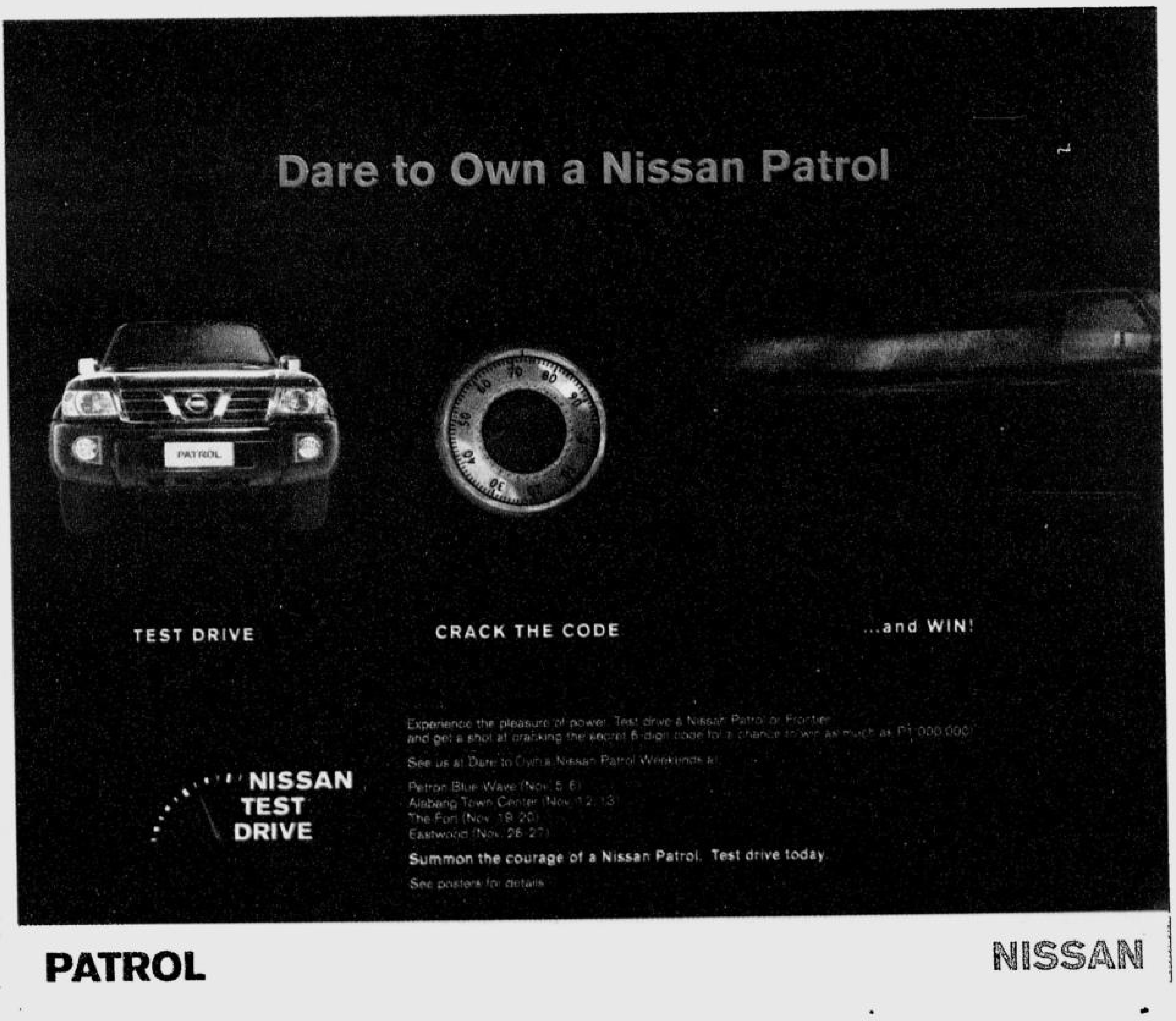

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NOTICE OF SEARCH AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Board of Trustees of the Mindanao Polytechnic State College formally and publicly announces that the Search for Presidency of the MINDANAO POLYTECHNIC STATE COLLEGE is now open. Interested applicants and/or nominees are invited to send their formal applications to the Search Committee chaired by Dr. Ester A. Garcia.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must be a Filipino citizen
- Preferably a holder of a doctorate degree
- Preferably between 40 to 60 years old but not more than 65 at the time of application.
- Must be morally upright
- With recognized leadership in his/her profession in the academe of industry
- With at least five (5) years of managerial/administrative experience

In addition to the above-mentioned qualifications, the applicants should make a full disclosure of all administrative, criminal, and/or civil case filed in any court in the Philippines and are required to submit the following clearances:

- National Bureau of Investigation
- Sandiganbayan
- Civil Service Commission and/or Certificate of No Pending Administrative case issued by the Administrative Officer of present employer
- Previous employer

Formal application addressed to the Search Committee should be accompanied with:

- Detailed curriculum vitae and certified supporting documents
- Proposed vision, mission and thrusts of the College
- Results of neuro-psychiatric examination conducted by any government physician or any accredited health institution
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Interested applicants and/or those nominated for the position are requested to submit six (6) sets of their formal application and certified supporting documents on or before 29 November 2005 to:

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(PDI-Oct 27 28 & Nov. 2, 2005)

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OFFICE OF THE BAC CHAIRMAN
Second Agrarian Reform Communities Development Project (ARCDPII)

INVITATION TO RE BID

November 2, 2005
World Bank/IBRD Loan No. 7152-PH

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of the ARCDPII and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the following contracts located at the Barangays Upper Irasan and Labakid, Municipality of Roxas, Province of Zamboanga del Norte. The Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guideline: Procurement under IBRD Loan and IDA Credits.

The Municipality of Roxas, Province of Zamboanga del Norte and implementing partner of the DAR for ARCDPII invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Rehabilitation of the 3.569 kilometers of Upper Irasan - Labakid Farm to Market Road under Contract Number RIRR 03 017 01 DVI-ZN

Project Duration	100 Calendar Days
Bidding Documents	PHP 3,500.00
Minimum Bid Security	PHP 84,000.00
Bid Closing Date	December 5, 2005 Time 10:00 AM

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:

Item No.	Scope of Works	Quantity	Unit
11	Removal of 36"dia RCPC	1 line-4pcs	LS
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21	Aggregate Base Course	2,141.40	Cu. Mtrs.
43	Reinforcing Steel	4,756.00	Kgs
44	Concrete Class "A"	75.52	Cu. Mtrs.
50(3)	Installation of 610mm dia. RCPC	64.00	Ln.Mtrs.
50(4)	Installation of 910mm dia. RCPC	21.00	Ln. Mtrs.
51(2)	Grouted Riprap	108.50	Cu. Mtrs.
52	Stone Masonry	88.00	Cu. Mtrs.

Minimum Equipments Required

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A complete set of bidding documents maybe purchased by the interested bidders at the BAC Secretariat Office of the Municipality of Roxas, Province of Zamboanga del Norte starting November 3, 2005 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PHP3,500.00 for each set. Pre-bid conference will be held in the same address on November 22, 2005 at 10:00 AM.

Bids shall be valid for a period of 90 days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security deposit of PHP84,000.00 in form, Cash, Certified Check, Manager's Check, Bank Guarantee, on a freely convertible currency, and shall be delivered to the BAC Secretariat Office of the Municipality of Roxas, Province of Zamboanga del Norte, on or before the Bid closing date on December 5, 2005 at 10:00 AM, at which time the Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

The LGU-BAC ARCDPII of Roxas, Zamboanga del Norte reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate indemnity to the contractor/bidder for any expenses that they may incur in the preparation of bid and to accept **the lowest evaluated, responsive and complying bid.**

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(PDI – November 2, 2005)

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1.5% easy carloan 7815352/55

1.5% w/o taking Car 7228942-43

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2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

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LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-305	1 lot Three Years Comprehensive Maintenance Agreement for Alcatel OmniPCX Enterprise Communication Server/PABX, Telephone System (including software in PABX)	P 3,300,000.00	LBP Funds
2005-332	One lot Blade Server	2,400,000.00	LBP Funds

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Bidding for the above requirements are scheduled on November 23, 2005 at 1:00 PM and pertinent Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 for each ITB.**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **November 8, 2005** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to **Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).**

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose bid is most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI-Oct 26 & Nov. 2, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Leyte
Municipality of Mahaplag
Bids and Awards Committee

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Date : October 25, 2005
Loan No. : 4299-PH
IFB : SFF-MWSP-01-2005

To All Qualified Bidders:

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the *International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)* towards the cost of financing the Community-Based Resource Management Project (CBRMP) and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for civil works component of the project. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines for Procurement under World Bank Loans.*
2. The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the **Construction of the Municipal Waterworks System, in the Municipality of Mahaplag, Province of Leyte.**
3. Bidding documents may be purchased from **October 26, 2005 to November 24, 2005** at the Municipality of Mahaplag with address at Mahaplag, Leyte for a non-refundable fee of **Php 8,000.00** for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) calendar days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a bid security in the amount of **Four Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Pesos (Php 475,000.00)**, which maybe in the form of cash, manager's check or bank guarantee and shall be delivered to the **Bids and Awards Committee, Municipality of Mahaplag** - on or before **November 25, 2005, 10:00 am**, at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. A pre-bid conference will be held on **November 9, 2005, 10:00AM** at **SB Session Hall, Mahaplag, Leyte.**
6. The committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids which may found disadvantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **CARMELITO C. ALONZO**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
Email Address: mahaplagleyte@yahoo.com
Cell No. 09219233471

(PDI-Nov. 2, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Teodora C. Rustia has been extrajudicially settled by her heirs as per Doc. # 111, Page # 23, Book #488, Series of 2005 before Notary Public Lucila M. Lawas-Yutok of Pasig City (PDI-Oct. 26, Nov. 2 & 9, 2005)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Ruben Coroza Jordan has been settled by their heirs with an extrajudicial settlement with quitclaims as per Doc. 37, Page 8, Book II, Series of 2004 before Notary Public Atty. Lino N. Agpoon of Quezon City (PDI-Oct. 19, 26, Nov. 2, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the loss of Metropolitan Club Inc. Stock Certificate No. B-1498 Membership No R-0663 in the name of Chang Jin Chong. If no contest received new cert. will be issued. (PDI-Oct. 19, 26, Nov. 2, 2005)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS FOR SALE

RESTOBAR 4 SALE P2.5M
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PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5275

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

18" & 24" CS Pipes under FGJ 50923
Approved Budget – PHP 6,110,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Harold T. Fontillas** starting October 26, 2005, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **November 3, 2005, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to and registered with the PNOC-EDC Purchasing and Traffic Division at the above address, and thereafter, dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Procurement Department office Wall Clock Time) of November 17, 2005.** Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI – Oct. 26 & Nov. 2, 2005)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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☎ 6350219 ☎ 6372008 Fax 6350220
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OBITUARIES

THE HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

DEATH NOTICES

JESUSA DUNGCA DAVID

Passed away on October 27, 2005.

Her body lies in state at Our Lady of the Abandoned Church, Poblacion Road, Muntinlupa City and will be transferred to Funeraria Lorenzo on the corner of Sande & Baltazar Sts., Tondo, Manila on November 3-4, 2005

Interment will be on Nov. 5, 2005 at Laloma Catholic Cemetery after the 3:00 p.m. funeral Mass at St. Pancratius Church.

FILOMENO PICO

Joined his Creator on October 26, 2005 at the age of 91.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Edsa, Makati City.

Interment will be on Friday, Nov. 4 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate; ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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7th Death Anniversary

AUGUSTO "BLONY" OCAMPO CAMPOS

30 August 1934 - 02 November 1998

His children **Sarah** and **Ricky**, **Joey** and **Dina**, **Janet**, **Judith**, **Nonoy**, **Junsky** and **Mary Rose**, **Jojo** and **Bob**, **Jennifer**, **John** and **Chrisette** and **Paolo**; grandchildren **Bam**, **Blonski**, **Adlyn**, **Javi**, **Llonie**, **Enzo**, **Church**, **Sandro**, **Jasmine**, **Danielle**, **Tara**, **Robby**, **Ricardo**, **Keoni**, **Bea**, **Blony**, **Andy**, **Cheru**, **Iñaki**, **Zacky**, **China**, **Adison**, **Sabine** and **Billy**

Massess will be offered on 02 November 2005 at the following:

Carmel of Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace Church (Lipa City, Batangas)	6:00 a.m.
St. John Bosco Parish (Arnaiz St., Makati)	6:00 a.m.
San Pedro Apostle Parish (San Pedro, Laguna)	6:00 a.m.
Sto. Rosario Parish (San Pedro, Laguna)	6:30 a.m.
Sto. Niño De Paz Community (Greenbelt Chapel, Makati)	7:15 a.m.
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish (Bel-Air, Makati)	7:30 a.m.
Parokya ng Immaculada Concepcion (Antipolo)	8:00 a.m.
Sanctuario de San Antonio (Forbes Park, Makati)	12:15 p.m.
St. Jude Thaddeus Parish (Trece Martires, Cavite)	4:00 p.m.
San Isidro Labrador Parish (San Pedro, Laguna)	5:00 p.m.
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish (Magallanes, Makati)	6:00 p.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
National Capital Region
U.N. Avenue, Manila

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the Supply/Delivery of Polyethylene (plastic) Bags/ Containers

1. The National Food Authority, National Capital Region, U.N. Avenue, Paco, Manila, through the Approved Corporate Budget for Calendar Year 2005, intends to apply the sum of **SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY NINE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED PESOS (P759,200.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the supply/ delivery of polyethylene (plastic) bags/containers. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall automatically be rejected at Bid Opening.
2. The National Food Authority - National Capital Region invites all interested licensed manufacturers of polyethylene (plastic) bags/containers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of 1,460,000 pieces of polyethylene (plastic) bags/containers with the following specifications:

MATERIAL	CAPACITY	SIZE (Inches)	MARKINGS
LDPE	One (1) kilogram	6x10 x .003	Plain

The schedule of activities are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DATE/TIME
1. Issuance of Application / Requirements for eligibility & to bid	October 26 - November 4, 2005 (From 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.)
2. Deadline Issuance of Application/Requirements	November 4, 2005, 5:00 P.M.
3. Pre-Bidding Conference	November 2, 2005, 10:00 A.M.
4. Bidding Proper	November 14, 2005, 9:00 A.M.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents. ITB. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine his responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the NFA-NCR Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM - Monday to Friday.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by the prospective Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of P500.00. The method of payment will be in Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received pesonally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The National Food Authority, National Capital Region, reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Food Authority - National Capital Region
U.N. Avenue, Paco, Manila
Telephone No. 563-94-37
Fax No. 563-94-65

(Sgd.) Atty. **BASILIDES TACO**
Asst. Regional Director/
Chairman RBAC, NFA-NCR

(PDI--Oct. 26 & Nov. 2, 2005)

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis Street, Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines
Telephones (632) 5513438 • 5513454 • Facsimile (632) 5513436
Email: info@peza.gov.ph • Website: www.peza.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

I.T. Equipment Requirements of PEZA

1. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), through its Corporate Operating Budget for CY 2005 intends to apply the sum of PhP 6,730,000.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the I.T. Equipment Requirements of PEZA. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The PEZA now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the following lots with their corresponding ABC:

Lot 1 – Personal Computers, Servers, Printers, KVM Switch, External CD Writer and Accessories = PhP 5,430,000.00
Lot 2 – Anti-Virus Software = PhP 300,000.00

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the ABC. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from 26 October to 07 November 2005, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of PhP 2,500.00 and submission of a certified copy of their G-EPS Certificate of Registration. The method of payment will be cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *PEZA* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on 11 November 2005, 2:00 p.m. at the 6th Floor, Social Hall, Almeda Building III, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:00 a.m. of 23 November 2005. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of GSIS Surety Bond in the amount of not less than 2.5% of the ABC or in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit in the amount of not less than *1% of the ABC*. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
7. Bid opening shall be on 23 November 2005, 2:00 p.m. at the 6th Floor Social Hall, Almeda Bldg. III Roxas Blvd. corner San Luis St., Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
8. In case any of the above dates is declared a special non-working holiday, it will automatically be reset on the next working day.
9. The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat
3/F Almeda Building III Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City.
Tel. No. 891-6444 / Telefax No. 551-3567
e-mail: peza bac secretariat@yahoo.com
website: www.peza.gov.ph

(Sgd.) BAC Chairman

(PDI-Oct. 26 & Nov. 2, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
MATIMYAS BLDG., 101 E. RODRIGUEZ SR. AVE., QUEZON CITY
TEL. NO.: (632) 712-3341 TO 54 FAX NO.: (632) 712-1110 E-MAIL: www.nfa.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Provision of Janitorial Services from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*, through its *2006 Corporate Operating Budget* intends to apply the sum of *P7,497,452.16* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the *provision of janitorial maintenance from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006.*

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the *provision of janitorial maintenance from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006.* Period of coverage is January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **Instruction to Bidders (ITB).**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY-BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.*

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P2,500.00. The method of payment will be *CASH*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* **will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *November 9, 2005 at 2:00 p.m.*** at the *NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City.*

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the *NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City on November 23, 2005* from 1:00 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. Late Bids shall not be accepted. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in either of the following form and amount.

Form of Security	Required Amount in Percent of ABC
Cash, cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One percent (1%)
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent 1.5%)
Surety Bond stamped "Callable on Demand" on the face of the Bond issued by GSIS	Two and a half percent (2.5%)
Any combination of the above	Proportionate to share

Bid opening shall be on *November 23, 2005 at 2:00 p.m.* at the NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procuring Entity – *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*
Contact Persons – *Jose D. Chua/ Violeta S. Villarama*
Address – *101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City*
Telephone No. – *(632) 712-3341 loc. 8923 or 8520*
e-mail address – *vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph*
Fax No. – *(632) 712-0454*
Website – *www.nfa.gov.ph*

(Sgd.) **PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.**
Deputy Administrator and BAC Chair
for Administration and General Support Services

(PDI - Oct. 26 & Nov. 2, 2005)

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY WATER DISTRICT
263 Rizal Avenue, Puerto Princesa City
Tel. Nos. 433-2408, 433-5032, 433-6802
Fax No. (48) 433-6803

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Puerto Princesa City Water District through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of the Project	Supply and Delivery of Two (2) Units Brand New Generator Sets
Location	Puerto Princesa City Water District
Brief Description	1 Lot, 2 units Brand New Identical Generating Set; 90 KVA; 440/220 VAC; 3Ø; 4 wire
Approved Budget For the Contract	One Million Eight Hundred Thirty Two Thousand Pesos (Php 1,832,000.00)
Delivery Period	Thirty (30) Calendar Days from the receipt of the Notice to Proceed

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least fifty percent (50%) of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	October 27 - November 18, 2005
2. Pre-Bid Conference	November 7, 2005, 1:30 PM PPCWD Board Room
3. Deadline for Submission of Bids	November 21, 2005, 1:30 PM PPCWD Board Room
4. Opening of Bids	November 21, 2005, 1:30 PM PPCWD Board Room

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable amount of One Thousand Eight Hundred Pesos (P1,800.00) to the Puerto Princesa City Water District Cashier.

The Puerto Princesa City Water District assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **ENGR. VICENTE D. ABREA**
PPCWD BAC Chairman

(PDI - Oct 26 & Nov 2, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
MATIMYAS BLDG., 101 E. RODRIGUEZ SR. AVE., QUEZON CITY
TEL. NO.: (632) 712-3341 TO 54 FAX NO.: (632) 712-1110 E-MAIL: www.nfa.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Purified Water from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006
(15,600 containers of 5-gallons each)

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*, through its *2006 Corporate Operating Budget* intends to apply the sum of *P500,000.00* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the *supply and delivery of 15,600 containers of 5-gallons each purified water from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006.*

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the *supply and delivery of 15,600 containers of 5-gallons each purified water from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006.* Period of coverage is January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **Instruction to Bidders (ITB).**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY-BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.*

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P1,000.00. The method of payment will be *CASH*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* **will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *November 9, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.*** at the *NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City.*

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the *NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City on November 23, 2005* from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. Late Bids shall not be accepted. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in either of the following form and amount.

Form of Security	Required Amount in Percent of ABC
Cash, cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One percent (1%)
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent 1.5%)
Surety Bond stamped "Callable on Demand" on the face of the Bond issued by GSIS	Two and a half percent (2.5%)
Any combination of the above	Proportionate to share

Bid opening shall be on *November 23, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.* at the NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procuring Entity – *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*
Contact Persons – *Jose D. Chua/ Violeta S. Villarama*
Address – *101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City*
Telephone No. – *(632) 712-3341 loc. 8923 or 8520*
e-mail address – *vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph*
Fax No. – *(632) 712-0454*
Website – *www.nfa.gov.ph*

(Sgd.) **PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.**
Deputy Administrator and BAC Chair
for Administration and General Support Services

(PDI - Oct. 26 & Nov. 2, 2005)

ALBAY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

ALECO invites qualified contractors to bid for the **supply, installation and commissioning of a 10 MVA Substation** inclusive of a three years deffered payment scheme. Eligibility and bidding documents may be secured from ALECO office on **November 7 to 10, 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 10,000:00.

Eligibility requirements must be submitted on or before **November 10, 2005.** Previous bidders shall submit additional documents only for pre-qualification. Pre-qualification of bidders will be on **November 12, 2005** at ALECO Boardroom.

Site inspection is on **November 15, 2005 at 9:00 a.m.** All prospective bidders shall be required to attend site inspection and shall be issued Certificate of Inspection for eligibility to bid. For purpose of clarifying some issues, a pre-bid conference will be on **November 15, 2005** at 2:00 p.m. at ALECO Boardroom. Previous participants to the unsuccessful bidding process last **October 5, 2005** may or may not attend the site inspection but are required to attend the pre-bid conference.

Sealed bids shall be received by **ALECO on or before 2:00 p.m. November 22, 2005** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

ALECO reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to ALECO.

(Sgd.) **JOSE MISAEL B. MORALEDA**
Chairman, Technical PBAC - ALECO

(PDI - Nov. 2 & 3, 2005)

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BOTIKA NG BAYAN CHAIN

₱30-M fund set up for drugstore program

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS EARmarked a P30-million funding facility to encourage small drugstores to be part of the nationwide Botika ng Bayan chain where medicines are sold at lower prices.

Roberto M. Pagdanganan, chair and president of the Philippine International Trading Corp., said PITC had signed an agreement with the government-run Small Business Guarantee and Financing Corp. (SB Corp.) to implement the financing project.

Pagdanganan said the P30 million was renewable every year and that it was now open for qualified drugstores that want to be part of the Botika ng Bayan network.

"For this project, SB Corp. is opening two financial undertakings—the SME-Feasible for start-up and new drugstores and the SME-Flexible for drugstores already operating for at least a year," he said.

"This is an important breakthrough in helping new and existing retail drug outlets to be part of the Botika project which PITC launched in December last year," the PITC chief said.

The Botika program is aimed at making available essential medicines at affordable prices to the poor people.

"Giving our small business entrepreneurs attractive financing plans would definitely boost the government's drive to enlist to the program as many qualified retailers as possible," Pagdanganan said.

Under the agreement, medium-term financing of three to five years would be given to applicants, which is considered an improvement over the prevailing two- to three-year terms extended to other small and medium enterprises.

The minimum loanable amount is P200,000 and the maximum is P5 million.

PITC would endorse and certify that the new or existing retail drugstores comply with all the eligibility criteria for qualified borrowers.

Pagdanganan said that so far, PITC has organized a network of at least 650 drugstores nationwide.

Its target is to have as many as 1,500 drugstores in the Botika ng Bayan program by the end of the year.

Mekeni gears for export of meat products

By Christine Gaylican

FOOD MANUFACTURER MEKENI FOOD Corp. prepares to enter the export market with an investment of P30 million in the expansion of its manufacturing facility in Pampanga.

Mekeni Food plans to export some 15 metric tons of processed meat, such as hotdogs and tocino, to the Middle East next year, according to Mekeni vice president for finance and administration Prudencio S. Garcia in an interview.

"We have had talks over the last six months with the export traders for possible entry to the Middle East, particularly Filipino communities in Dubai," he said. "As far as the quality is concerned, it is at par with international levels. We have attained Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (certification)."

It recently obtained the best meat processing plant citation from the Department of Agriculture's National Meat Inspection Service.

He said the concern now was to look for a container big enough to deliver 10-15 tons of meat products a shipment.

"We still have to fix the marketing aspect, but we (plan to) deliver a minimum of 20 tons a week," said Garcia.

Mekeni, a medium-sized meat processor with a plant in Porac, Pampanga, sells processed meat products that are cheaper than those produced by most of its competitors.

He said exports would increase company sales by 10-15 percent next year.

"This year's sales target could exceed the P500-million target. Hopefully, in the remaining two months, we can achieve this," said Garcia.

Boracay taxes rising, BIR says

By Michelle V. Remo

ILOILO CITY—THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue has reported a substantial increase in the tax collected from businesses in Boracay Island, reflecting a continued pick-up in economic activity in the popular tourist destination.

Revenue authorities of Iloilo said the increase in tax collection was also partly attributed to the heightened monitoring of the tax compliance of businesses here, including resorts and restaurants.

The BIR's Iloilo office said that as of Oct. 21, the revenue district office of Kalibo, Aklan, which covers Boracay, collected P302.32 million in taxes, of which P51.98 million came from businesses in Boracay.

Lilivic Minguez-Gatdula, revenue district officer of Kalibo, said the collection from Jan. 1 to Oct. 21 this year reflected a 10-percent increase over last year.

She said 2005 would be the second consecutive year that the BIR would be recording higher then expected revenues from businesses in Boracay.

"The former BIR Commissioner (Guillermo Parayno Jr.) saw the progressiveness of Boracay, so the BIR decided to put up a satellite office there," Gatdula told reporters after a meeting between the Iloilo revenue authorities and Finance Secretary Gary Teves last week.

She said the BIR office in Boracay made it convenient and easy for businesses to pay their correct taxes.

Gatdula added that the establishment of the BIR headquarters in Boracay took away the hassle of going out of the island just to register a business or pay taxes.

"We expect to further increase our tax collection from Boracay," Gatdula said, noting her office's plan to further improve tax collection in the province.

Data from the Department of Tourism showed that tourist arrivals to Boracay has been rising in recent years.

Tourists in 2003 totaled 339,208, rising to 428,751 in 2004.

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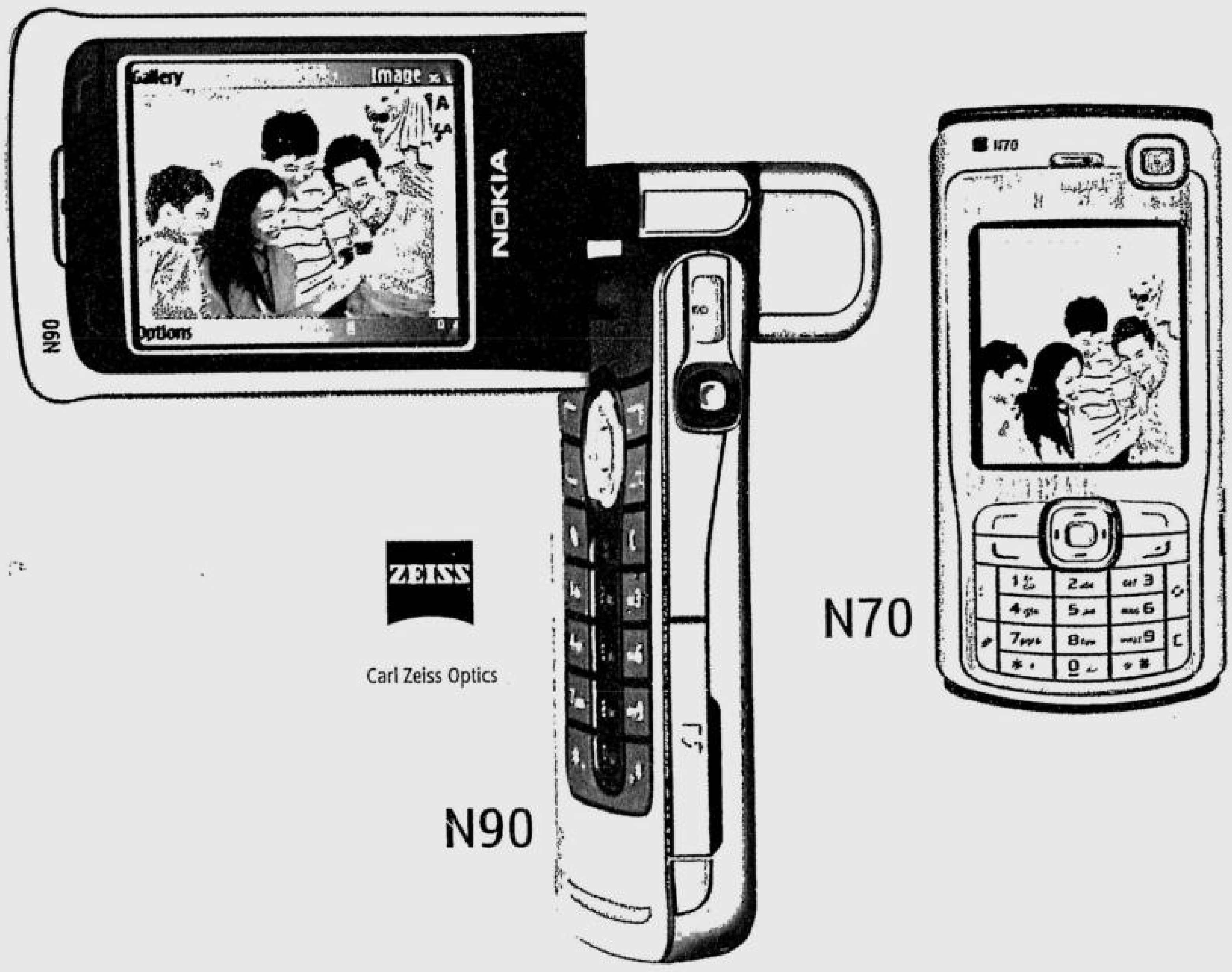

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HALLOWEEN HANGOVER

We can't get enough of Halloween. The costumes, the ghost stories, the candy—we love it. 2bU! remains in Halloween mode this week. Scary kids, people spilling their deepest fears, 10 terrifying scenarios we don't want to see, music to listen to and graphic novels to read to put you in a spooky mood. We've even thrown in a little magic for you. Yes, every day can be Halloween—if you want it to be

2BU'S GLOOM AND DOOM LIST FOR 2005

TOP 10 SCARIEST SCENARIOS

By Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent

WITH ALL THE BAD STUFF that's already happening nowadays, you might be thinking, heck, what's the worst thing that could happen?

A lot.

2bU! presents the top 10 scariest scenarios that will make you pray novenas this Halloween. And trust us, the dead walking the earth should be the least of your worries.

10. Carnivals and cemeteries become one. It never fails to amaze me how a somber, peaceful atmosphere can instantly turn into a garish freak show of traffic jam, trash, gambling tables and overpriced food. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I'm pretty sure that this holiday was intended to honor the dead, not defile their graves. A little common decency here, people—they're not called resting places for nothing.

9. More skeletons rattling in the closet. Seems like we're being bombarded with so many shocking revelations one after another that the word "scandal" is hardly effective anymore to define them. Whether it's another voice recording or a fresh new batch of ineligible basketball players, all I can say is come out, come out, wherever (or whoever) you are.

8. Payatas is officially declared the Eighth Wonder of the World. You only have to smell it to believe it. Forget tsunamis —we've got our own tidal wave of trash right here. Who needs water when we're about to drown in our own filth? "Minor" avalanches have already claimed the lives of several people, and pretty soon the stench and the bacteria will eventually make their way into our clean, cozy little homes. Give me a watery grave anytime.

7. Suicide bombers go trick-or-treating. So far, there have been no updates on the Indonesian bombers who had dodged NAIA's super-strict security and are allegedly hiding in Mindanao. With the holiday rush just a hair's breadth away, no wonder the government has so valiantly tried to conceal this little factoid. But apart from that, there's no real cause for panic. Not yet.

6. Death by water hose. Prayer rallies are supposed to be peaceful, but not in this country. That was the day both politics and religion overstepped their bounds. Not only have people sustained injuries from the force of the water, but the whole nation also witnessed how insolently they were treated, the clergy or lay.

5. FPJ's ghost manifests himself to the "rallying" crowd. "*Walang iwanan,*" he once said. Will he get to fulfill his promise this Halloween? After the unsightly "baptism" of anti-PGMA rallyists in Plaza Miranda, it will only take one voice from beyond the grave to lift the dampened spirits (pun intended) of FPJ supporters. For the sake of safety and order (if that's even possible), let's pray FPJ's really resting in peace.

4. The QC carjackers strike again. Sorry to put a damper on your sembreak spirits, kids, but I believe that this merits your attention, especially those of you who love partying till dawn. These goons with guns sandwich your car, force you to surrender your vehicle and valuables, and take you to a remote place where they abandon you (if you're lucky). They're not picky with their targets, having preyed on lone drivers, families and chauffeur-driven cars alike. Also, they're known to hang around in places like Tomas Morato, Gilmore and Quezon Avenue, so be warned.

3. Epidemics spread worldwide. "*Uso*" diseases like dengue and bird flu have started to raise the mortality rate to alarming proportions, with new viral and bacterial strains popping up and mutating even as we speak. If this keeps up, we won't be able to find a cure

TOP 10/C4

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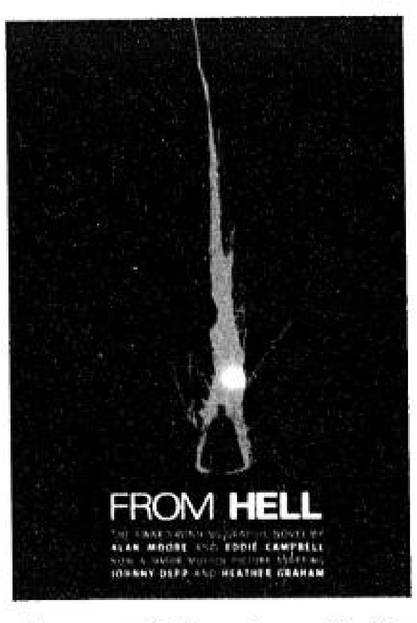
Halloween home-reading list

By Ces Cabangon
2bU! Correspondent

THE DARKNESS NEVER FAILS TO seduce and haunt us. Its void gives birth to nightmares and beings that dance outside the limits of reason. Thus we search for sanctuaries, or create works that mirror our fragility. From our well of emotions, art and stories bleed on a blank page, fueled by angst, pain, fear—ingredients that can rouse the macabre and the fantastic from the hidden depths of our soul. Perhaps you'll recognize your own monster from the abyss, shrouded in pictures or words from another's whispers or screams.

This Halloween, wander through borderlands past witching hours with some self-contained graphic novels. These titles may cause your heart spasms. Yet they are also for you to reflect on the things that gnaw in the stillness of hours—your own mortality, truths in shades of gray, the delirium of change.

These comics must be approached with an open mind as themes revolve around the farthest levels of Dante's inferno where redemption and happy endings are not as you know them to be. They are not for everyone, but then again, neither is the darkness.



'Arkham Assylum' by Grant Morrison

The gut: It's April Fool's Day and the inmates of Arkham Asylum have taken control. In exchange for the hostages' lives, Batman must accept the Joker's challenge to play a game of hide and seek. Sounds easy? Not if you have to deal with the likes of the Scarecrow, Two-Face, Mad Hatter, and other demented villains under one roof.

The stake: This is not your typical Batman tale as our hero explores the intricate maze of insanity and questions his own mental stability. The disturbing narrative is a triptych of Bruce Wayne, Batman, and the asylum's founder, Amadeus Arkham. From their points of view, we delve into their pysches and the villains' own broken ones, and the plagues of their emotional core.

'The Crow' by James O'Barr

The gut: Eric is killed callously and his girlfriend made to suffer a brutal end. The immensity of his pain allows him to return from the dead through the power of the crow. With his voodoo smile, wicked poetry, and arsenal of rage, Eric seeks vengeance on the murderers.

The stake: It took James O'Barr 10 years to complete the story of "The Crow." The anguish from losing his fianceé after a hit-and-run was the catalyst that drove him to create this tale where justice can be sought even beyond the grave. "The Crow" just tugs at your heart as every page encapsulates the author's/character's hurts and sorrows. Amid the killing rampage, Eric breaks through emotional walls and brings touching insights on humanity and love.

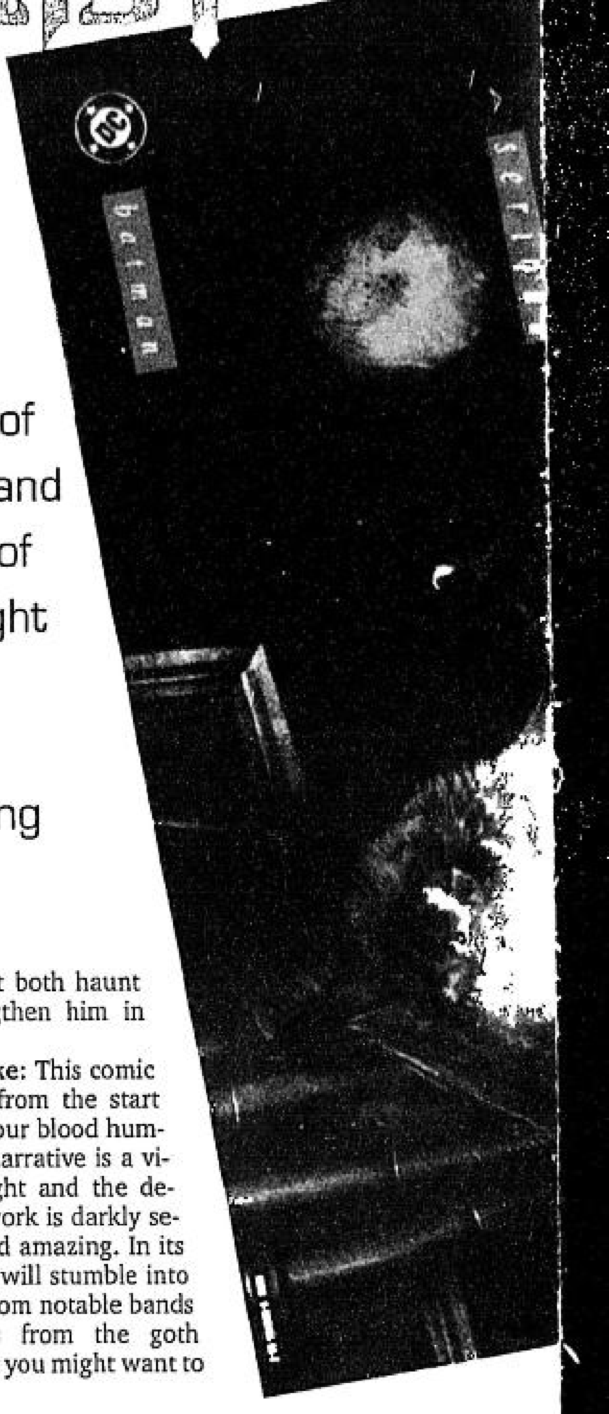
'Death: The High Cost of the Living' by Neil Gaiman

The gut: Once every century, Death of the Endless takes mortal form in order to understand and experience what it means to be mortal and what it takes to leave your life behind. In mortal form, Death befriends Sexton, a teen contemplating suicide. Together, they spend a day strolling through New York, searching for a witch's heart and eating bagels.

The stake: Death is no grim reaper but someone sweet, honest, witty, friendly, and quite cheery. She makes you think, laugh, and treasure the spontaneity of every moment. This book gives a very good introduction to Death that one who is unfamiliar with "The Sandman" series can follow the story.

In the shadow of EDGAR ALLAN POE

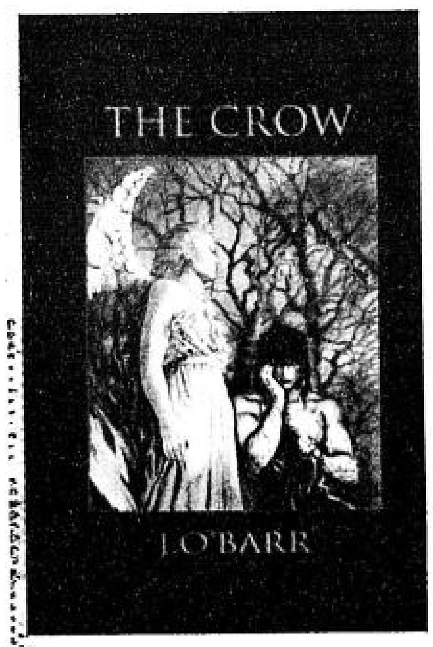
Enjoy drops of blood and slices of midnight from these witching titles



'Dhampyr' by David Hontiveros

The gut: Nikolai is a dhampyr, born from a human mother and an undead father. In order to save his soul from restlessly wandering for eternity, he must find and slay his father. Nikolai's personal journey leads him through a train wreck of memories, where collision of the past and the present both haunt and strengthen him in his battles.

The stake: This comic bites you from the start and gets your blood humming. Its narrative is a vicious delight and the detailed artwork is darkly seductive and amazing. In its pages you will stumble into snippets from notable bands and icons from the goth movement you might want to look into.



DEATH COMES IN MANY GUISES...

'From Hell' by Alan Moore

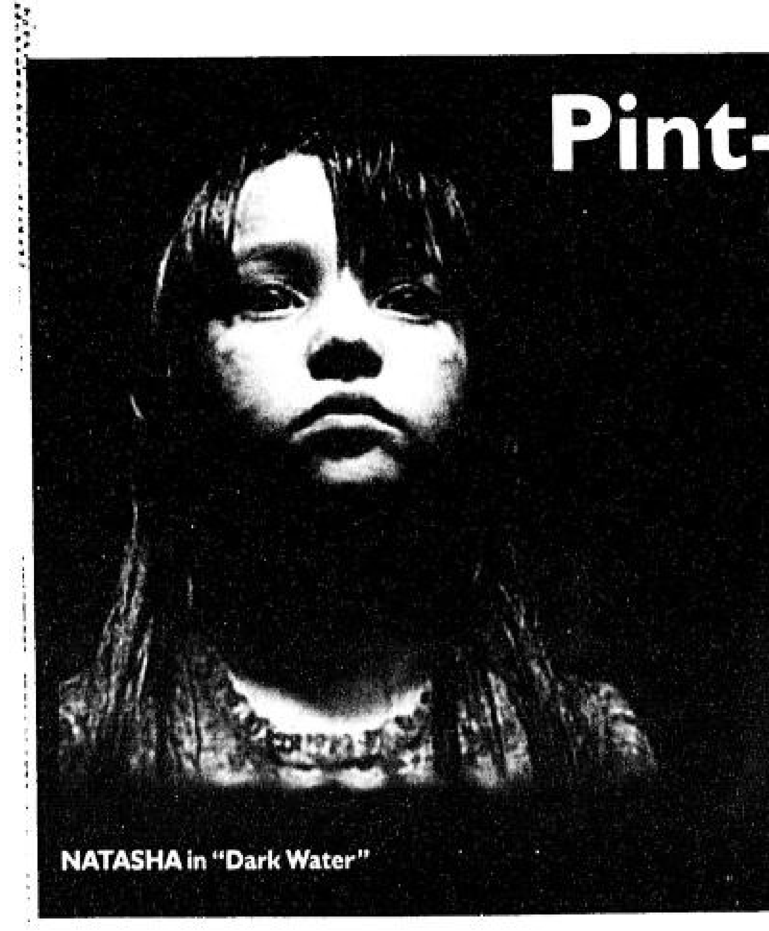
The gut: A very complex take on one of history's most gruesome and mysterious personalities—Jack the Ripper. From the beginning, readers know who the killer is and are assailed with the depths of his genius and his unraveling.

The stake: This work is brilliant as it is grounded on meticulous research from Victorian London to the Freemasons. The intriguing conspiracies and intelligent theories are mind-blowing. What adds to the horror is that fact and fiction seem to fit perfectly, as the White Chapel murders are true accounts.

'In The Shadow of Allan Poe' by Jonat

The gut: A scholar i examine his vision of through a diary whi been written by the au death. The memoir be consenting to demons through life and the gr

The stake: When d longer imprisoned in what does one do? Fact tions on Poe's tormen are woven to produce and disconcerting tale composed of mani tographs, adds to t tone of the narration.


NATASHA in "Dark Water"

Pint-sized terrors

By Marla Miniano
2bU! Correspondent

KIDS ALWAYS DELIVER THE BEST scares—whether they're peeking from the window, lurking under the bed, running around the house, or sobbing softly at midnight. Who says all little kids are sugar-and-spice-and-everything-nice?

Tiyanak in 'Tiyanak'

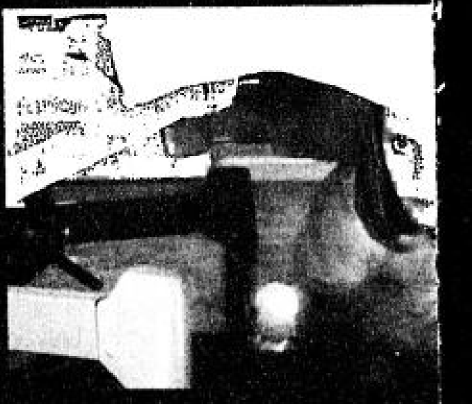
The creature from the 1988 movie continues to haunt Pinoys today. The *tiyanak*, (a.k.a. Anak ni Janice), is a hideous monster disguising itself as a cutesy baby so it can gobble up unsuspecting victims. "*Hala kukunin ka ng tiyanak*," is one of the most popular lines our parents used to make us behave when we were snotty little kids. And because these traditions must be passed on to the next generation, our own children will most likely hear the same line from us. Long live Pinoy mythology!

Kyra Collins in 'The Sixth Sense'

Mischa Barton may be all glam and gorgeous now, but years ago, she was that sorry-looking ghost with unfinished business hiding underneath the bed, seeking the help of Cole (Haley Joel Osment), the boy who sees dead people walking around. Kyra gives Cole a videotape of her mother poisoning her to death, and performs the freakiest vomiting scene since "The Exorcist."

Jodie DeFeo in 'The Amityville Horror'

Jodie hears gunshots, hides in the closet and is killed by her psycho older brother. Years later, a new family moves in, and she plays with the youngest daughter and appears in the master's bedroom with her tongue hanging from her mouth while Mommy and Daddy are playing. A babysitter enters the closet on a dare, and Jodie puts the poor lady's finger through the gunshot wound in her forehead. We hear frantic screaming, and the next thing we know, the babysitter is being taken out of the house on a stretcher.



Natasha in 'Dark Water'

Little girl is abandoned by her Mommy, wanders into the building's rooftop, and falls into the water tank. A newly divorced woman moves into the building with her daughter, Ceci, and little gho her bac wit rhy ma ceil bot up (the cou ly o

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Nocturnal symphonies

By Ces Cabangon

WHEN BLUE SKIES FADE TO black, when the atmosphere is thick with strange transmissions, when your soul is under the spell of echoes and shadows playing—that is when the music of the night thrives.

In the spirit of Halloween, let us bring into the light of the moon music that strokes the darkness in one's soul. Music before Evanescence, Marilyn Manson and Gregorian Chants: The Dark Side. Music, in short, that is not in your everyday easy-listening selection.

Let the claws of your imagination sink in and clasp the energy from these nocturnal waves. Dance with your demons this season of Halloween.

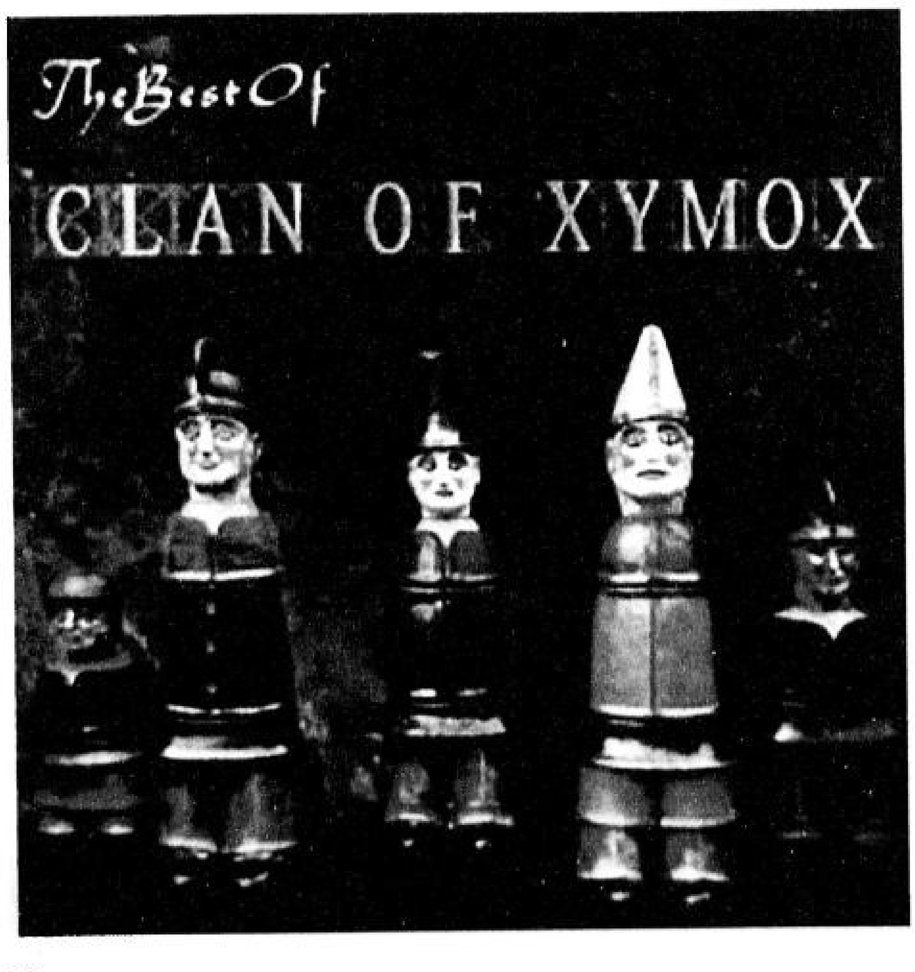
SIOUXSIE Sioux

Bauhaus

Bauhaus was formed in post-punk England in 1978. The band, whose name is rooted in the German art movement, gained popularity in the 1980s, appearing in and providing the opening score for the vampire classic "The Hunger." Bauhaus' sound is experimental, thus it is hard to pin down. It taunts and teases with different moods, textures and lyrics. Bauhaus is credited as the first Goth group, spawning subcultures. Though it has many songs that are between eerie and playful, its most famous is the Goth anthem "Bela Lugosi's Dead." Also check out "Stigmata Martyr" and "Dark Entities." If you're interested in music driven by strange desires and crimson sadness, Bauhaus Singles from 1979-1983 vol. 1 is a good place to start.

The Cure

Robert Smith formed The Easy Cure in 1976 when he was only 17. Two years later, the band changed its name to The Cure. There's something about The Cure's music that just hooks you, and soon enough you're addicted. It can suspend you in gravity, or keep you afloat in a misty dream with its enticing tunes and contemplative lyrics. If you're curious to hear the band's darker works, dig for songs composed from the late '70s to the early '80s. "Killing An Arab" is of note. This song is not a racial attack but actually inspired by Nobel winner Albert Camus' existential masterpiece, "The St your ears up for "The H Garden" and "Lullaby" fo of flight and unusual shapes.



In the spirit of Halloween, let us bring into the light of the moon music that strokes the darkness in one's soul

Dead Can Dance

It was 1981 when this ban formed, with members Lis

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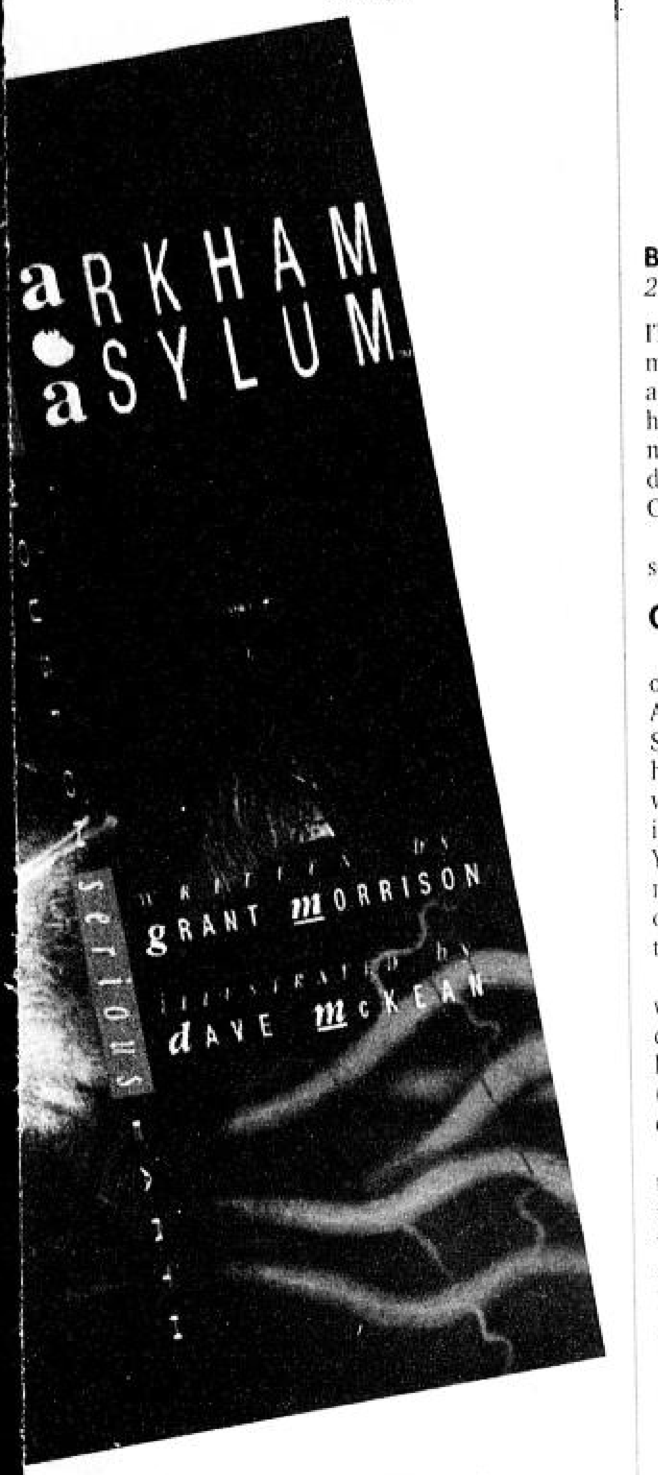

Edgar han Fuqua

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'The Thief of Always' by Clive Barker

The gut: In the Holiday House, Harvey Swick discovers many wonders where seasons pass in a day and every night is Halloween. But something is not right in this magical place and Harvey vows to get to the bottom of it.

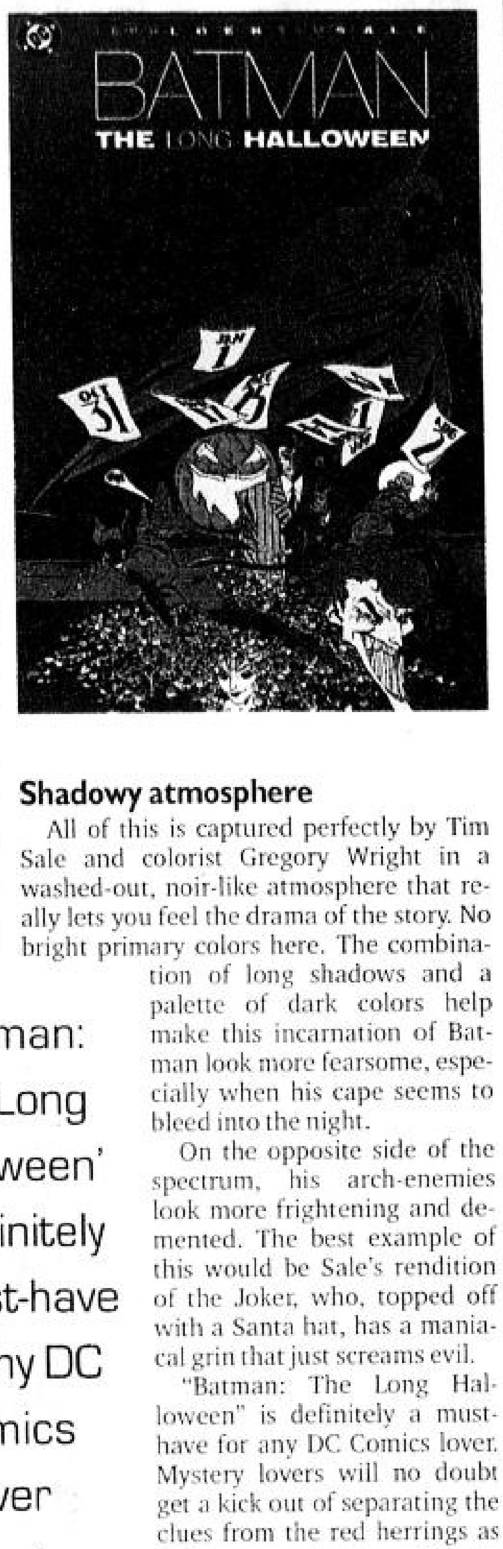
The stake: Classic reading takes you through the innocence and magic of childhood. Though the plot seems simple, its elements are striking and leave you awed. This not-so-ordinary children's story has many lessons to impart despite its edgy creepiness.

All titles available at Comic Quest and Fully Booked.

The Dark Knight as a rookie

"Batman: The Long Halloween"
Written by Jeph Loeb
Illustrated by Tim Sale

By Adrian Dy
2bU! Correspondent



IT BEGINS ONE HALLOWEEN with the murder of a mob prince in his tub, with only a carved pumpkin and a spent pistol left behind as clues. After one long year and 20 more dead bodies with accompanying holiday-themed mementos, the killer is caught. Or so Batman thinks.

You'll have to cut him some slack. You see, this all happened in his rookie year.

Compilation

"The Long Halloween" is a compilation of the 13-issue mini-series by the Eisner Award-winning team of Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale. For one year, the "Holiday Killer," as he was dubbed, terrorized Gotham City with a series of violent murder sprees during each major holiday of the month (New Year's Eve, Father's Day, etc.), leaving Batman, the police and, in a memorable sequence, the Riddler, stumped as to his identity.

Up until the time "The Long Halloween" was published, Batman comics largely focused on the Caped Crusader's swashbuckling and gizmo-loving personality aspects (Bat Shark Repellant anyone?).

"The Long Halloween" turned that on its ear by shining the spotlight on a Batman who was a detective first and a superhero second. Jeph Loeb, who went on to write scripts for the TV show "Smallville," captured the unseasoned Dark Detective perfectly. Much like in the movie "Batman Begins," Batman here is still clumsily searching for allies in his quest against crime, and is even more down to earth than his cinematic alter ego, with only a grappling hook and some smoke bombs to speak of.

> 'Batman: The Long Halloween' is definitely a must-have for any DC Comics lover

The memories of his murdered parents still weigh heavily on him as well, especially during Father's and Mother's Day. And if all that, coupled with the Holiday murders and the usual psychopathic antics of the Scarecrow, Poison Ivy and the Joker weren't enough, he still has to contend with his feelings for Catwoman, and must deal with the transformation of his friend from the mild-mannered District Attorney Harvey Dent to the villain known as Two-Face.

Shadowy atmosphere

All of this is captured perfectly by Tim Sale and colorist Gregory Wright in a washed-out, noir-like atmosphere that really lets you feel the drama of the story. No bright primary colors here. The combination of long shadows and a palette of dark colors help make this incarnation of Batman look more fearsome, especially when his cape seems to bleed into the night.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, his arch-enemies look more frightening and demented. The best example of this would be Sale's rendition of the Joker, who, topped off with a Santa hat, has a maniacal grin that just screams evil.

"Batman: The Long Halloween" is definitely a must-have for any DC Comics lover. Mystery lovers will no doubt get a kick out of separating the clues from the red herrings as they try to do Batman one better and figure out the identity of "Holiday" before he does.

Also included in the book are several deleted pages, so even if you have this story in single issues, the trade paperback is still worth picking up, if only for the alternate ending.

As for casual Batman fans, no question about it, this is something you should wish gets dropped into your goodie bag this All Hallow's Eve.

MISCHA Barton in "The Sixth Sense"

st girl wants the Mommy for
elf. She leaves her Hello Kitty
kpack lying around, messes
the elevator, sings nursery
mes in the middle of the night,
es dark water drip from the
ng and gets Ceci in trouble by
hering her at school. She ends
trangling Ceci in the bathtub
glass door is shatter-proof, of
rse) as Mommy cries helpless-
utside. To save her daughter,

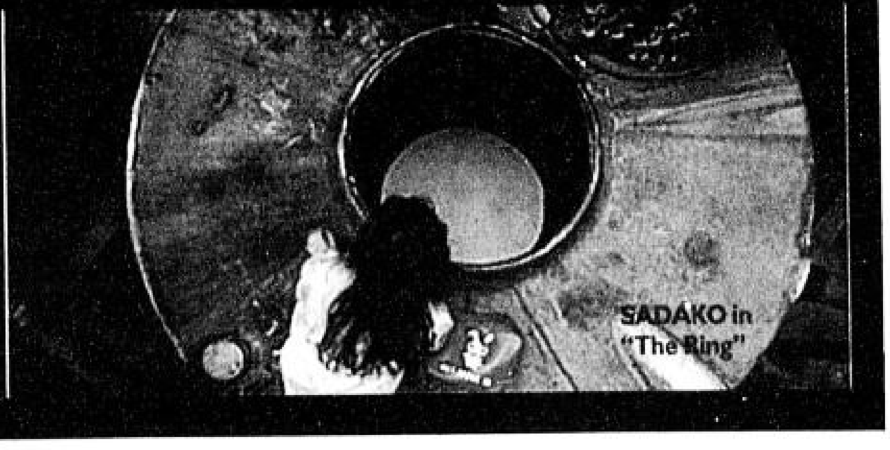
VERUCA Salt

Mommy has to promise to be little ghost girl's mother... forever.

Veruca Salt in 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'

If she doesn't scare you, no evil thing will. Wait, that's another character. But this rich kid's a very bad nut indeed, pushing people around and expecting everyone to follow whatever little whim she has at the moment. Need proof? Well, refer to memorable lines such as "Daddy, I want another pow-ney," "Make time go faster," and "All I've got at home is two dogs and four cats and six bunny rabbits and two parakeets and three canaries and a green parrot and a turtle and a bowl of goldfish and a cage of white mice and a silly old hamster! I want a squirrel!"

Perhaps Mr. Wonka was right: Maybe she is a wart you get on the sole of your foot. Let's hope she learned a thing or two from "the rather different set of friends" she had the privilege of being acquainted with at the chocolate factory.



SADAKO in "The Ring"

XYMOX

Keep
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Ger-

rard and Brendan Perry creating sorcery. Dead Can Dance's music is eclectic, ethereal, ambient, dark, and other-worldly. It embraces Celtic, African and Eastern influences. The duo's soulful singing and raw energy lingers and chills the mute chambers of your heart. Shut your eyes and listen to the richness of "The Carnival Is Over," "The Ubiquitous Mr. Lovegrove," "Dreams Made Flesh" and "Music for Vampires."

The Doors

The Doors cuts through generations with its fusion of jazz, blues and rock 'n' roll. The band is best remembered for lead vocalist, Jim Morrison, with his sultry voice, shamanistic performances, profound poetry and devilish looks. The Doors' spellbinding magic lies in the complexity of its compositions and the substance of its songs. The Doors had a distinct musical style that was ahead of its time, permanently sealing its place in the altar of popular culture. Discover just how powerful Jim Morrison's singing is in "The Best of The Doors" album. Be hypnotized by "The Crystal Ship," "Riders on the Storm" and "The End."

Joy Division

The members of this group first got together in 1976. It was in 1978 that they renamed themselves Joy Division. The name comes from a book called "The House of Dolls" and refers to women who were abused in Nazi concentration camps. The spirit of Joy Division's music borders on the dark and the chaotic. Listen to the album "Substance" and feel how Ian Curtis is very much alive as he pierces and tears at you with each song of desperation, disillusion and confusion. Apart from the album, seek, brood and lose yourself in "Heart and Soul," "No Love Lost," "Atmosphere" and "Disorder."

Siouxsie and the Banshees

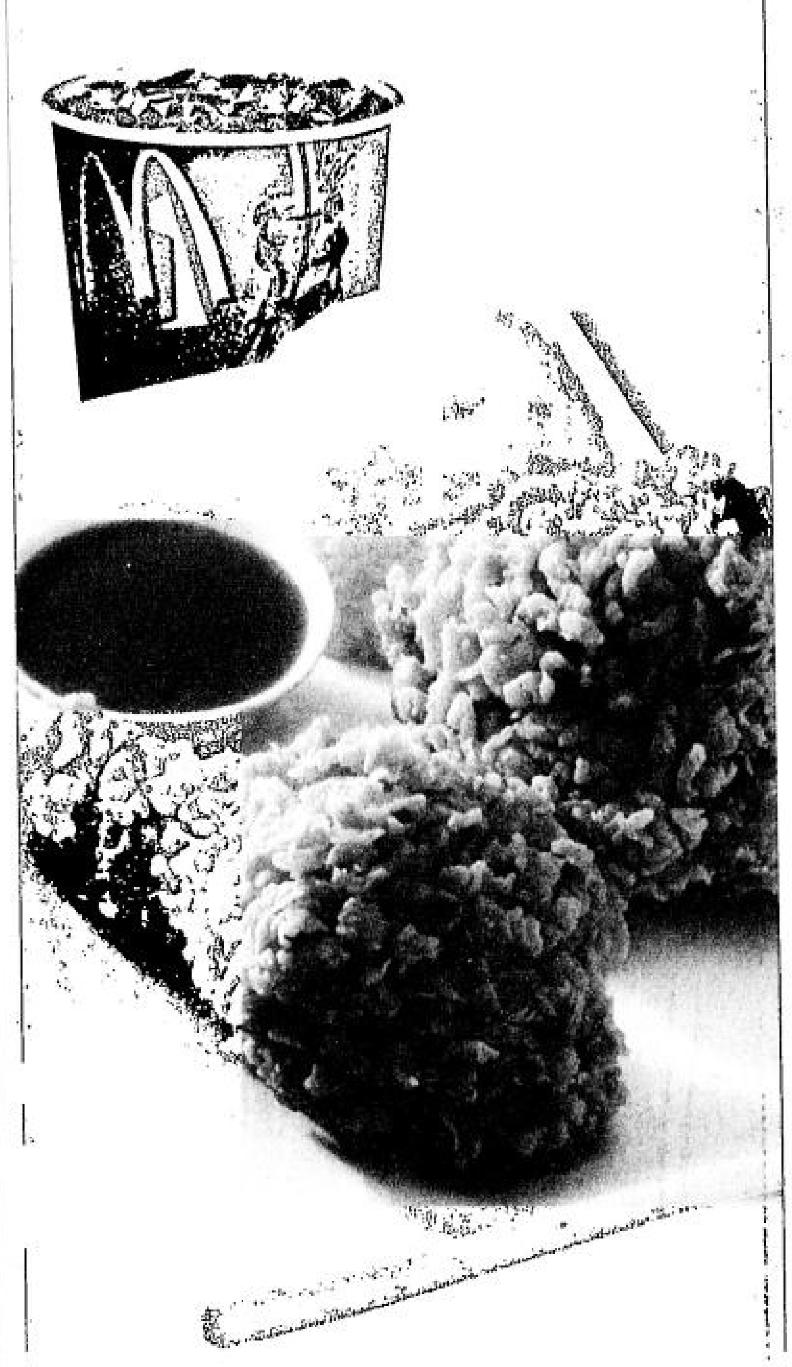
This group began making music in 1976 to fill in an empty slot for an international punk rock festival in the UK. Part of the original band included Sid Vicious of The Sex Pistols. Siouxsie Sioux is Susan Janet Ballion, notorious for her sense of fashion and distinct vocals. Siouxsie hounds you with her imposing voice. She can mesmerize and feed you to the razor teeth of darkness. Siouxsie & The Banshees' unsettling lyrics and inventive sound are wonderful companions on nights when you feel like howling at the moon. Its albums are fairly accessible. Look for a compilation of the band's best hits to savor its varying styles. At night, blister your soul with these lullabies: "Trust In Me," "Hall of Mirrors," and "The Sweetest Chill."

DEAD CAN DANCE

Xymox

Also known as Clan of Xymox, the band originated from the Netherlands in 1983. It has been creating music for over 30 years. The blend of guitars, electronica and lyrics of shadowy blends transforms and animates the night. The sound is somewhere between Joy Division and Depeche Mode, an enticing range full of mysterious appeal. Albums from this band are obscure to find here, so perhaps you might consider file-sharing programs on the Web. Be ensnared by tracks like "Masquerade," "Medusa," "Imagination," "Jasmine and Rose," "Louise" and "It's All A Lie."

We deliver working lunches.



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2BU! SURVEY

What scares you?

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

SURE, GRUESOME MONSTERS, headless ghosts and hairy beasts expectedly terrify us. But let the following answers prove that goose pumps can come, not only from monsters and ghouls, but also from everyday experiences.

I'm scared of fast-moving vehicles, maybe due to a car accident I had. **—Gilbert Chan, 25, not afraid of rallies**

I'm most scared of the death of a family member.**—Gem Herras, 25, not afraid of Sadako**

Zombies and ghosts.**—Michael Maguigad, 22, not afraid of heights**

I'm scared of hold-uppers and ghosts. **—Gie, 25**

Aside from roaches, I'm afraid of major catastrophes like earthquakes.**—Jam Anueva, 28, not afraid of eternally rising gasoline prices**

I'm scared to disappoint my *tita*. **—Sway, isn't afraid of cockroaches**

I'm super scared of cockroaches, especially the flying ones!**—Jana, 25**

Heights, and flying. That's why I'd rather take a ship or a land vehicle when going to far places.**—Lyn Piamonte, 17, wants to go abroad after college**

Change. I like things the way they are and I'm not sure if I can adapt to change. **—Rina Ramallosa, 21, thinks she needs a fashion makeover**

I get really scared whenever I'm inside the mall and it's closing time already. My heart beats thrice its usual speed. I feel as if I'd get locked inside.**—Vecky, 23**

That I won't have enough time to do everything I want and accomplish all the goals I've set for myself. **—Andrea B., 19**

Failure. I don't want to fail because it'd mean disappointing others.**—Mike Barbosa, 19**

Being separated from loved ones.**—Bianca M., 23**

Death.**—Victor, 26**

The usual—ghosts, creepy crawlies and those strange sounds during night time.**—Dan, 15**

I'm scared of being rejected.**—Omar, 22**

Confrontation, even when I'm the one who's right. Most of the time, I'd just let things pass. I don't like bringing certain points to the attention of the people involved.**—Karl, 24**

Germs! I'm super OC and it's just crazy how there are so many germs and viruses everywhere. **—Larry, 17**

Me.**—Paola P., 25**

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

TOP 10 SCARIEST SCENARIOS

From page C1

in time. In the meantime, you might want to read up on these silent killers to avoid becoming a statistic.

2. Mother Nature finally turns her wrath on the Philippines. How many times have you wished that the earth would open up and swallow you? Well, be careful with what you wish for. So far, our extremely fortunate country has gone unscathed by tsunamis, hurricanes and earthquakes that are currently wreaking havoc on the rest of our sorry little planet, but it doesn't mean we'll be safe for long. In the meantime, let's not further abuse nature.

1. The EVAT gets implemented, and soon everything will be too expensive to buy and everyone will eventually starve to death. Oh wait, this one's already happening. May God help us all.

E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko @atenista.net

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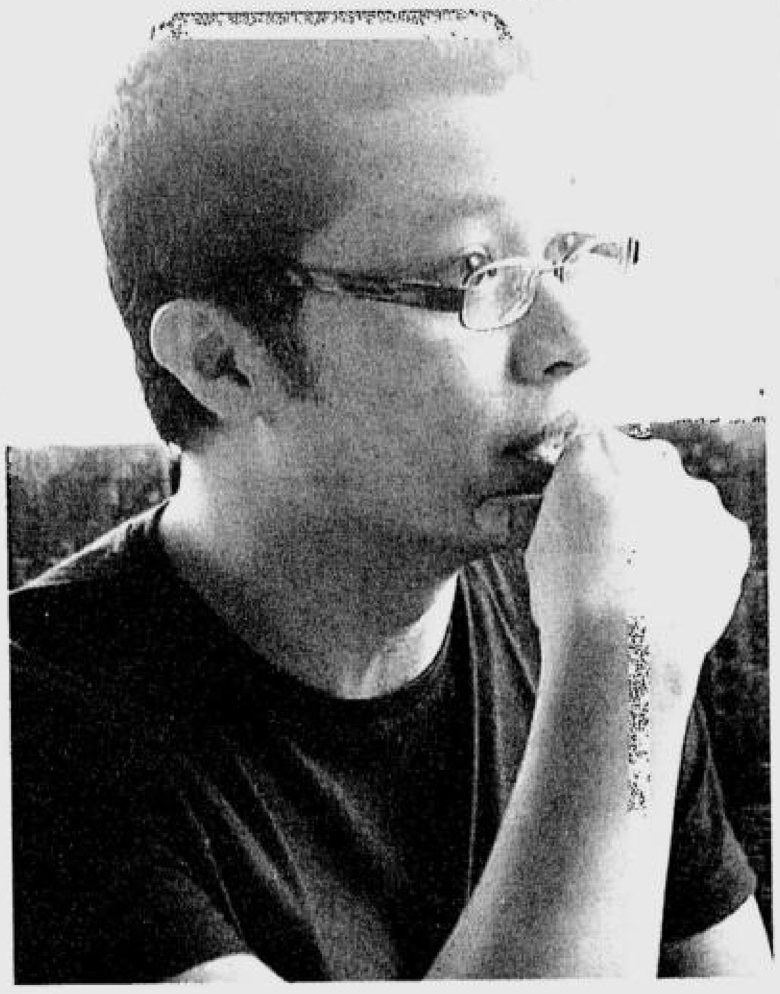
HE'S THE MANA

For his brand of magic, Eric Mana has been slapped by his audience, appreciatively

Text and photos by Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent



MAGICIAN ERIK MANA'S GREATest trick is not to disappear but to "appear." By moving to the Philippines after more than 10 years as a professional magician in Toronto, Canada, he has brought new life to magic in the country by breaking barriers of the stereotypical magician.

Back in Canada, Erik had toured with a magic troupe called Princess Karma & Company. In 1993, he pursued a solo career, eventually finding himself apprentice to several masters. In 1995, he created "Stranger," a show that combined magic, mentalism and hypnosis all in one. It ran successfully for six years through several colleges and the corporate circuit, as well as nightclubs and comedy bars.

In the Philippines, Erik has quickly become widely recognized, thanks to his numerous live performances. It didn't take long before he became the most featured Filipino magician in media and the most sought-after magician in the Philippines.

Erik even had his own TV special, "Stranger—The Magic of Erik Mana," the first ever independent, Filipino-produced magic television special in the Philippines, shown on July 23, 2004, on Studio 23.

The success of the special opened doors for Erik. Apart from encouraging response from fans, artists, politicians, major TV networks and powerful corporations, Erik also received (and accepted) offers to reveal Erik Mana-style several products for Panasonic, Hewlett Packard, Glaxo Smith Kline, Sony Ericsson and Nokia, among many others. He also performed during the two-night concert of singer Regine Velasquez at the Araneta Coliseum, and has also signed exclusively with Addict Mobile/Smart Telecom in a series of event performances. Erik is also the visual illusion consultant in the theater production of Atlantis' "Beauty and the Beast," directed by Bobby Garcia.

Second special

"Mastermind: The Magik of Erik Mana" is the magician's second installment in his magic TV specials. The two-part special is slated to air Nov. 11 and 18 at 10:30 p.m. on ABS-CBN, a little after Halloween. Sure to be as, or even more, magical, interesting and terrifying than the first one, "Mastermind" is definitely something to watch out for.

Meanwhile, it's time to get to know the mysterious magician a little more.

How different is "Mastermind" from "Stranger"?

The first one was very kind of light-hearted and bright. This one is dark. Like most of our shots were done at night. Like I said, it does involve a bit of the supernatural. It's gonna be a great show. We're really excited about it. And for sure, it might spook people out especially our second part.

Why should people watch the show?

Why? I think everyone needs a bit of magic in their lives right now, especially with all the bad stuff that's been happening, whether it's by government or by natural disaster. I think people need to unwind a little bit. Even though the show is a bit dark, I think magic always kind of leaves everyone in a sense of awe and I think everyone needs that.

How different or similar are you to David Blaine?

We're different in our stuff. We're similar in our background, in our skills. But I can't say Blaine is an authority of magic. Blaine was just a smart guy who took a camera out on the streets and did what he did and basically revitalized magic for what it is. That's why I give him a lot of respect. I can't say he's an authority.

Any backlash from the Catholics or the conservative sector?

None actually. I just performed at St. Scholastica. Even the nuns loved the show. I never had any sort of backlash from anybody. I think everyone appreciates what we do.

Do you still perform at kiddie parties?

Yeah, I still do.

What's so special about that?

The kids. I mean you see them light up. That's priceless. You can't trade that for everything. The kids are still at that age where everything is amazing and magical and wonderful.

Did you watch a lot of magic back when you were a kid?

That's actually how I got into it.

Did you believe everything that you saw?

At that time, yeah. I really did. I was a kid. I believed everything that I saw. This guy just cut a lady into three and pulled out her midsection. I was right there, I saw it. What's not to believe?

What makes a good magician?

Apart from the obvious, like being persistent and dedicated, what makes a really good magician is humility because you're showing people that you have this power and you can't be cocky about it.

How do you feel when people refer to magic as merely tricks?

You know what, it's only because of the lack of a better word. I mean, people would just call them tricks. For me, magic is magic. Whether it's a trick or not. When people call them tricks, I kinda cringe. Okay, I let that pass.

Did you ever want to give up and go back into whatever you were doing before magic?

I think for me, magic will always be a part of me. A part of my life. I love magic. But there are other aspects of me that I've always loved doing. My day job, in fact, before I got here, was a financial broker. I love the finance game. I love the real estate game. I also managed a restaurant one time, so one day, I'd like to have my own restaurant. In the end, it won't only be just magic. Magic will always be there.

What's the weirdest reaction you've ever received from the audience?

Some people cry. Some people really freaked out. I've been slapped, and this was in an affectionate way. I've been slapped in an affectionate way. From people laughing to people crying, I think it's a sort of a mind-numbing effect.

What kind of music do you listen to?

All kinds. As an audio engineer, they teach you to appreciate all kinds of music. What's on my shuffle now? I have Bjork.

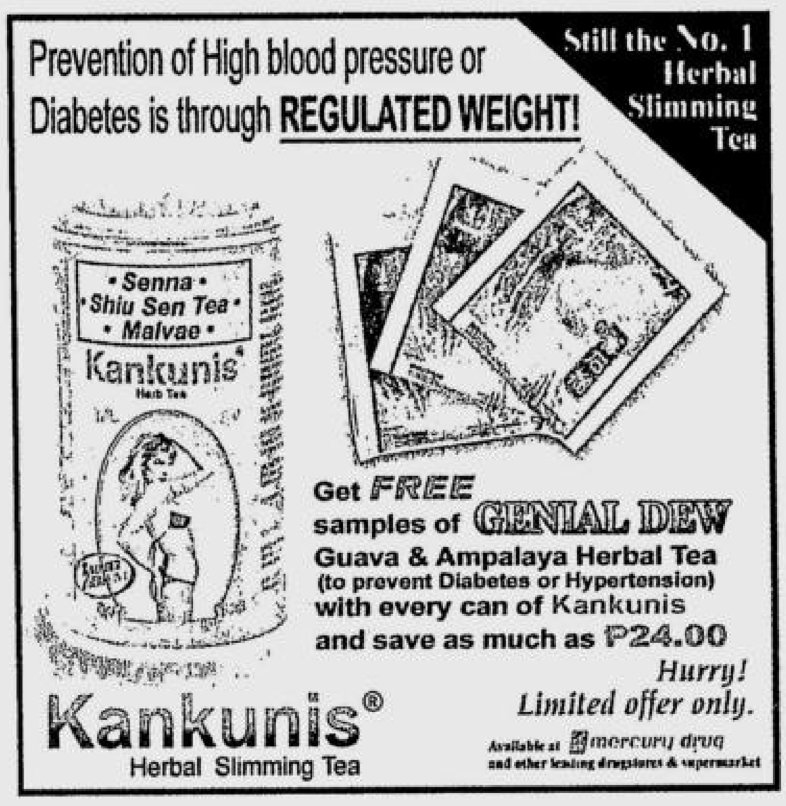
What scares you?

Scary movies. "The Ring," "The Exorcist," "The Omen." All those classic movies. "Blair Witch" also definitely freaked me out. It's all in the mind.

Do you use your magic to get to know girls?

I don't use my magic to do that. No.

"I LOVE cards. Cards are wondrous things. Cards just feel wonderful in your hands," says Mana the magician, shown here performing a card trick for a member of the press.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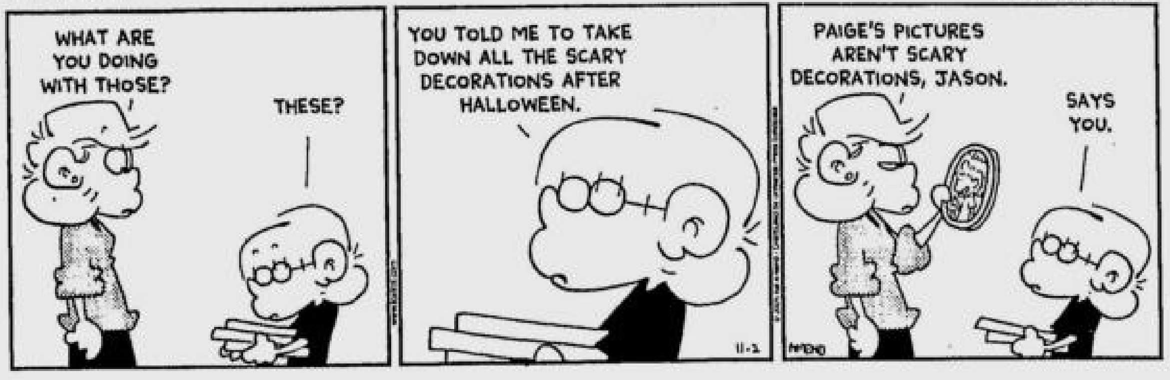
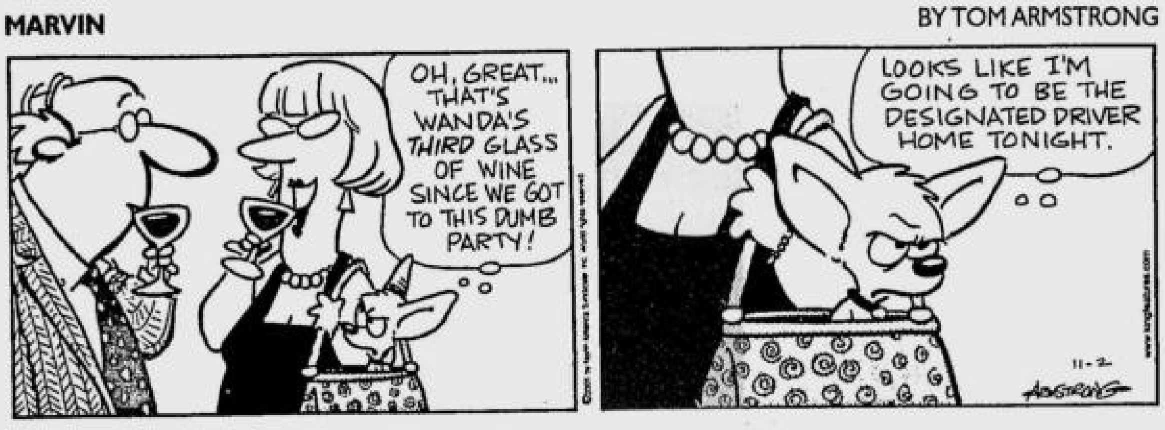

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THOSE?
THESE?
YOU TOLD ME TO TAKE DOWN ALL THE SCARY DECORATIONS AFTER HALLOWEEN.
11-2
PAIGE'S PICTURES AREN'T SCARY DECORATIONS, JASON.
SAYS YOU.
AMEND

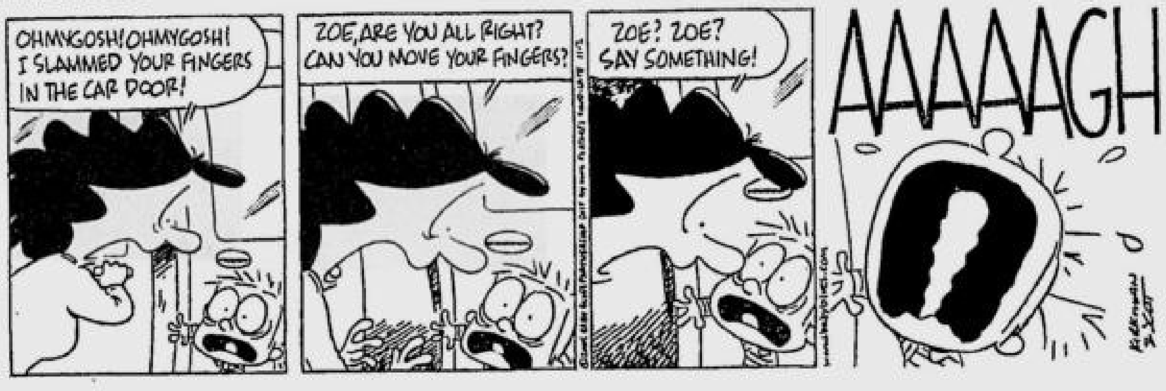
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


OH, GREAT... THAT'S WANDA'S THIRD GLASS OF WINE SINCE WE GOT TO THIS DUMB PARTY!
LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO BE THE DESIGNATED DRIVER HOME TONIGHT.
11-2
ARMSTRONG

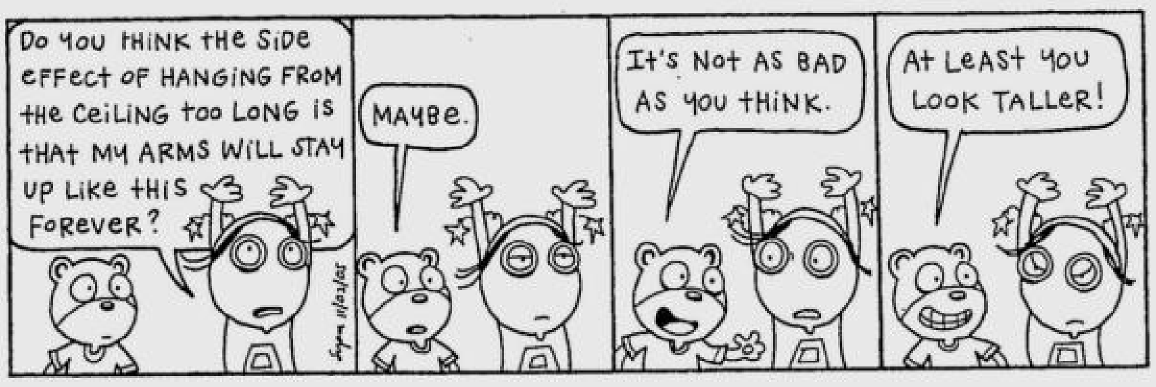
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


OHMYGOSH! OHMYGOSH! I SLAMMED YOUR FINGERS IN THE CAR DOOR!
ZOE, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? CAN YOU MOVE YOUR FINGERS?
ZOE? ZOE? SAY SOMETHING!
AAAAAGH

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Do you think the side effect of hanging from the ceiling too long is that my arms will stay up like this forever?
Maybe.
It's not as bad as you think.
At least you look taller!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're friendly and gregarious. But you need lots of stimulation. Your restless nature makes you move on from whatever is unsatisfying. You're intelligent and resourceful. People admire your humanitarian values. You have a witty mind; in part, this is because you're an astute observer of the human condition. Focus on your closest partnerships in the year ahead.

Birthdate of: Daniel Boone, American frontiersman; Nelly, rap/hip-hop artist; Stephanie Powers, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might run into difficulties related to sharing possessions with children today. (Erma Bombeck always warned about lending your car to anyone you have given birth to.) Oh yeah.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be extra-patient with family members and partners today. Discussions with parents could be strained. Others seem to block your bright ideas! What gives?

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Authority figures are not receptive to your suggestions at work. Don't let this get you down. This is a temporary black cloud on your horizon.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might feel that children and young people are an increased burden or responsibility today. Just cope with this. And remember: You were once a burden and responsibility to an adult too! (It's how the world works.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Discussions with parents do not flow easily today. Your suggestions will fall on deaf ears. Just be patient. Bide your time. Tomorrow is another day.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is one of those days when life seems to be hard. But this difficulty is gone by tomorrow! Just cope as best you can. Don't give in to negative thinking.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): An older friend might squelch your bright ideas or criticize you for some reason. Don't react. It's no big deal. When the annals of history are written, who will care?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a hard day to deal with bosses, parents, VIPs and authority figures. Be polite to the police. People in power are not going to easily give you permission. Be cool.

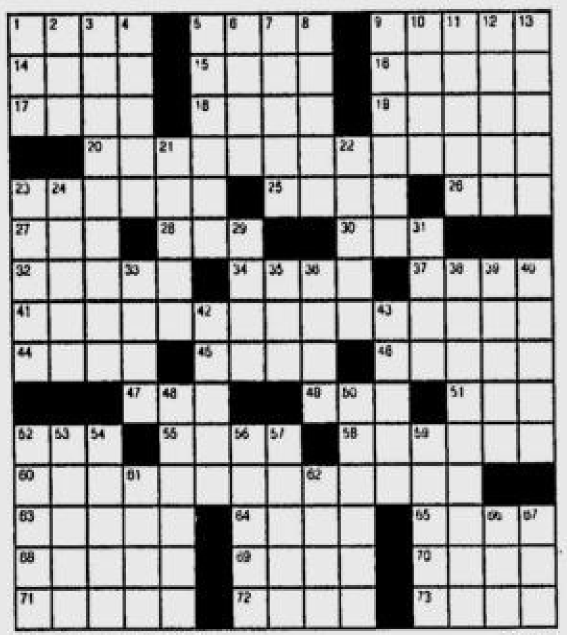
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You have to work hard at publishing, higher education and matters dealing with foreign countries. Travel plans are delayed. Your enthusiasm for something is diminished. Oy!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel cautious about money and possessions today. You fear that something won't come through for you. These feelings are temporary. In a few days, they're gone!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Be patient with partners, parents and bosses today. Don't be critical of others. And don't react to criticism from others. It's no big deal.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): The best way to handle today's energy is just to work hard. Better yet, work alone if you can. There's too much worry and negative thinking flying around.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

11/2/05

ACROSS
1 Swiss range
5 Autograph site
9 Surgical dressing
14 Element #80
15 Title role for Peter Fonda
16 Of an arm bone
17 "Typee" sequel
18 Blue and Cross
19 Passive protest
20 Maestro's furniture?
23 Cancels, as a launch
25 Weight allowance
26 Allow to
27 Speck
28 CPR performer
30 Sports Trojans
32 Starry hunter
34 Agitate
37 Exchange charge
41 Scientist's furniture?
44 Feudal serf
45 Iowa State city
46 Hi, in Hilo
47 Take one's pick
49 Russ. or Lith., once
51 Oriental sauce
52 Wedding vow
55 Gray side
58 Drunkards
60 Chemist's furniture?
63 FDR's biographer
64 Ratchet part
65 Elbe tributary
68 Rock
69 Director Kazan
70 Pulitzer winner James
71 More rational
72 Mild expletive
73 Clucking sounds

DOWN
1 I love: Lat.
2 Moon vehicle's letters
3 Advancement
4 Scrub
5 Braque's art
6 Actor Guinness
7 French legislature
8 Edison's rival
9 Abundant flows
10 Inter __ (among other things)
11 Prior to
12 Mobutu Sese Seko's country, formerly
13 German Dadaist
21 Minutes taker, perhaps
22 Mean
23 Unburnt brick
24 Becker or Yeltsin
29 Neat and tidy
31 Telephone
33 Vegetable oil spread
35 Curling surface
36 Highland miss
38 Zeroes
39 Blood of gods
40 Signs off on
42 Like fences
43 Chocolate alternative
48 Fitting
50 POW camp
52 No bid
53 Silt formation
54 Director Welles
56 Two-footed animal
57 Stairway to Puccini
59 Fabric fold
61 Skye of "Say Anything..."
62 Duplicate
66 Spider-spotter's cry
67 Legal thing

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

S	C	A	B	■	T	B	A	R	■	P	A	C	E	D
L	U	C	E	■	A	O	N	E	■	A	M	E	N	D
O	R	C	A	■	P	A	N	G	■	S	A	L	T	S
P	I	E	C	E	S	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	■
P	A	S	H	A	■	■	■	A	R	E	■	R	E	D
Y	E	S	■	S	O	C	C	E	R	■	T	I	N	Y
■	■	■	S	I	N	A	I	■	■	P	E	A	C	E
■	F	O	L	L	O	W	S	A	H	U	N	C	H	■
L	I	M	E	Y	■	■	C	L	U	B	S	■	■	■
A	N	E	W	■	P	R	O	P	E	L	■	A	H	S
P	A	L	■	T	O	E	■	■	■	I	S	L	E	T
■	G	E	T	S	T	H	E	P	I	C	T	U	R	E
U	L	T	R	A	■	A	R	I	D	■	E	M	M	A
M	E	T	E	R	■	S	I	L	O	■	E	N	I	D
P	R	E	Y	S	■	H	E	E	L	■	P	I	T	Y

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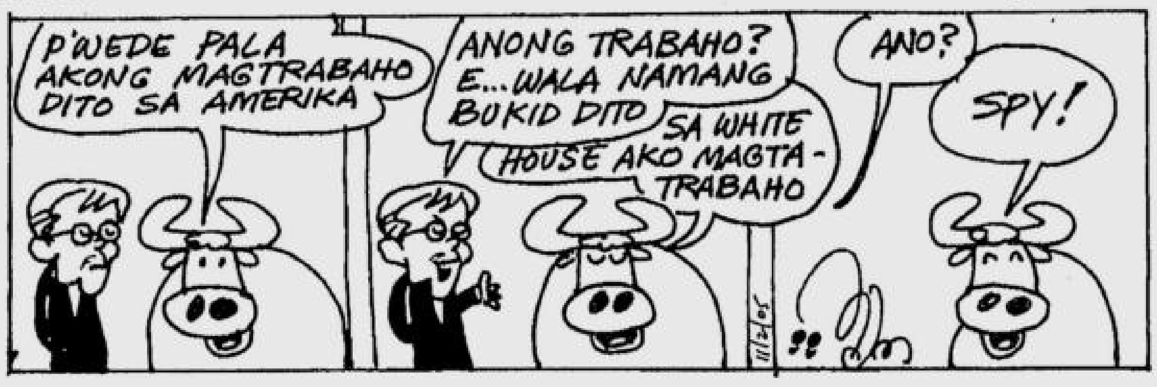
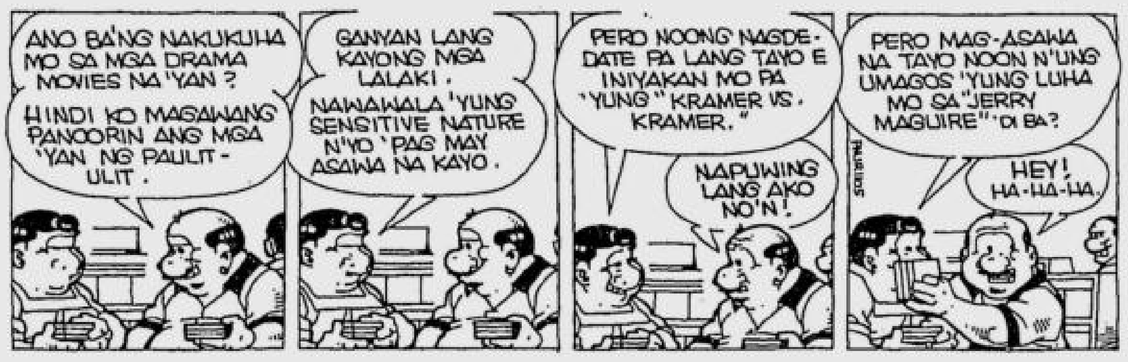
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


P'WEDE PALA AKONG MAGTRABAHO DITO SA AMERIKA
ANONG TRABAHO? E...WALA NAMANG BUKID DITO
SA WHITE HOUSE AKO MAGTA-TRABAHO
11/2/05
ANO?
SPY!

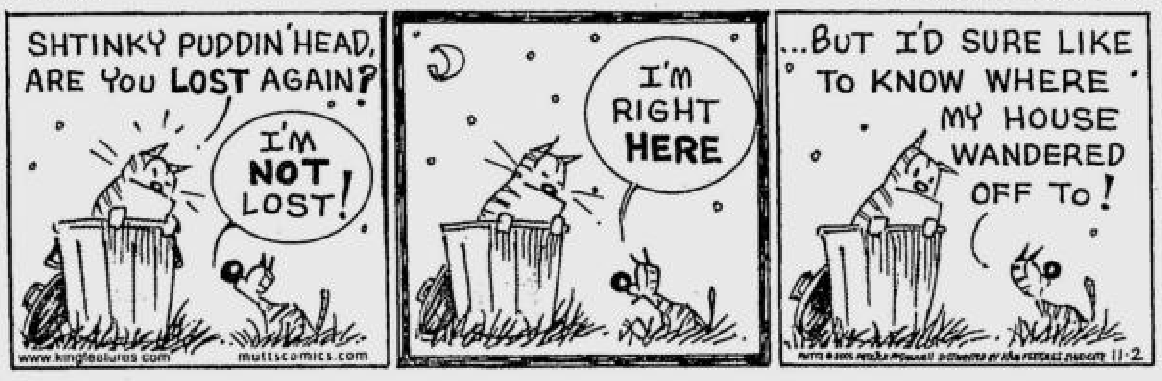
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO BA'NG NAKUKUHA MO SA MGA DRAMA MOVIES NA 'YAN?
HINDI KO MAGAWANG PANOORIN ANG MGA 'YAN NG PAULIT-ULIT.
GANYAN LANG KAYONG MGA LALAKI.
NAWAWALA 'YUNG SENSITIVE NATURE N'YO 'PAG MAY ASAWA NA KAYO.
PERO NOONG NAGDE-DATE PA LANG TAYO E INIYAKAN MO PA 'YUNG "KRAMER VS. KRAMER."
NAPUWING LANG AKO NO'N!
PERO MAG-ASAWA NA TAYO NOON N'UNG UMAGOS 'YUNG LUHA MO SA "JERRY MAGUIRE" 'DI BA?
HEY! HA-HA-HA.

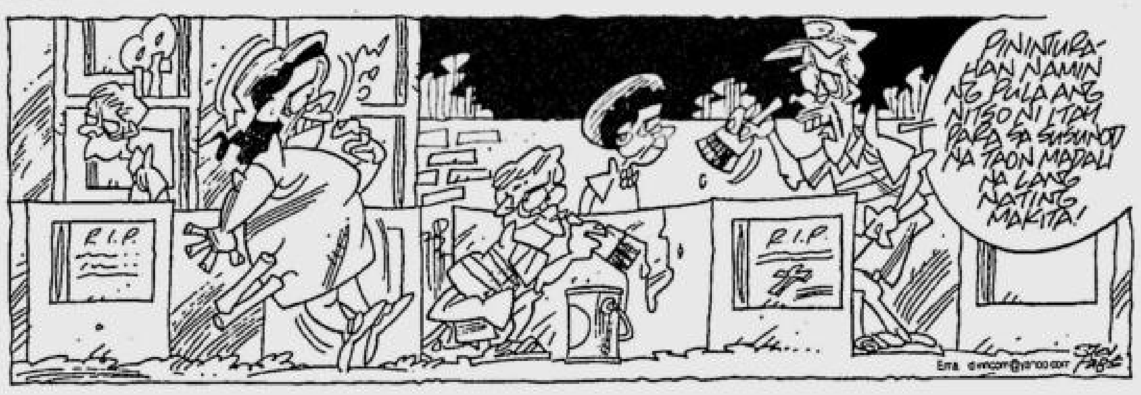
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHTINKY PUDDIN'HEAD, ARE YOU LOST AGAIN?
I'M NOT LOST!
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
I'M RIGHT HERE
...BUT I'D SURE LIKE TO KNOW WHERE MY HOUSE WANDERED OFF TO!
11-2

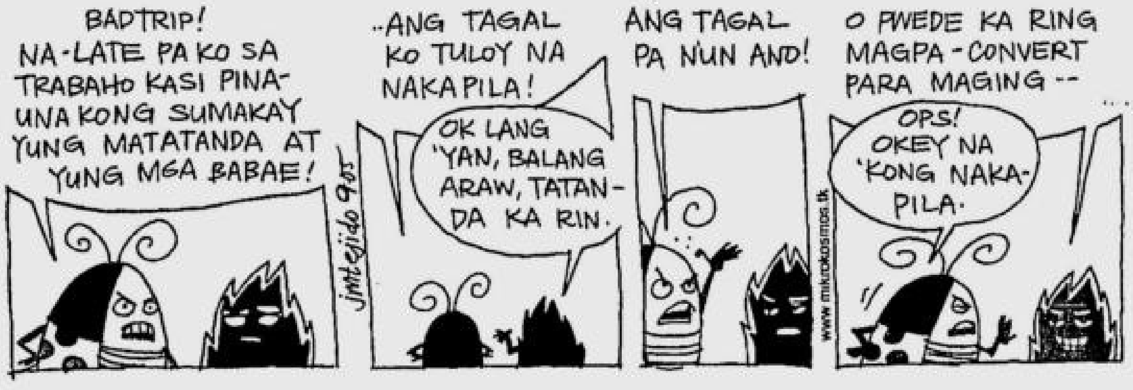
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


R.I.P.
R.I.P.
PININTURA-HAN NAMIN NG PULA ANG NITSO NI LTM PARA SA SUSUNOD NA TAON MADALI NA LANG NATING MAKITA!

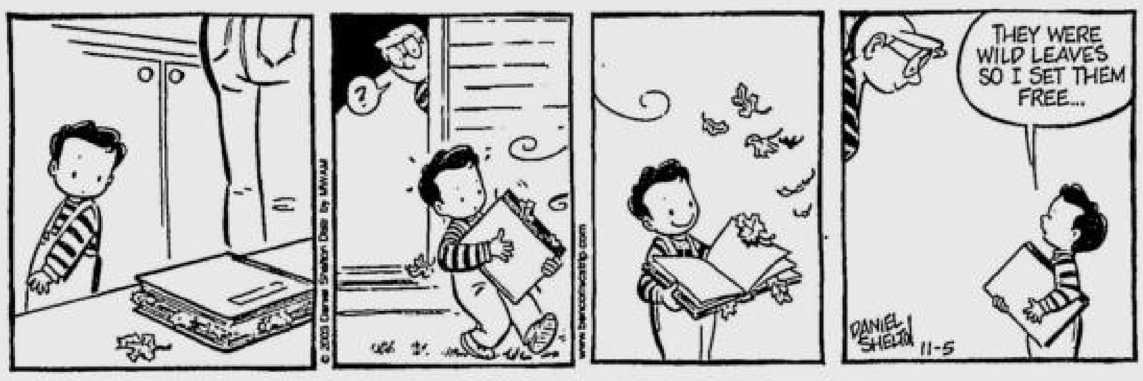
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BADTRIP! NA-LATE PA KO SA TRABAHO KASI PINA-UNA KONG SUMAKAY YUNG MATATANDA AT YUNG MGA BABAE!
..ANG TAGAL KO TULOY NA NAKAPILA!
OK LANG 'YAN, BALANG ARAW, TATAN-DA KA RIN.
ANG TAGAL PA NUN AND!
O PWEDE KA RING MAGPA-CONVERT PARA MAGING --
OPS! OKEY NA 'KONG NAKA-PILA.
www.mikrokosmos.tk

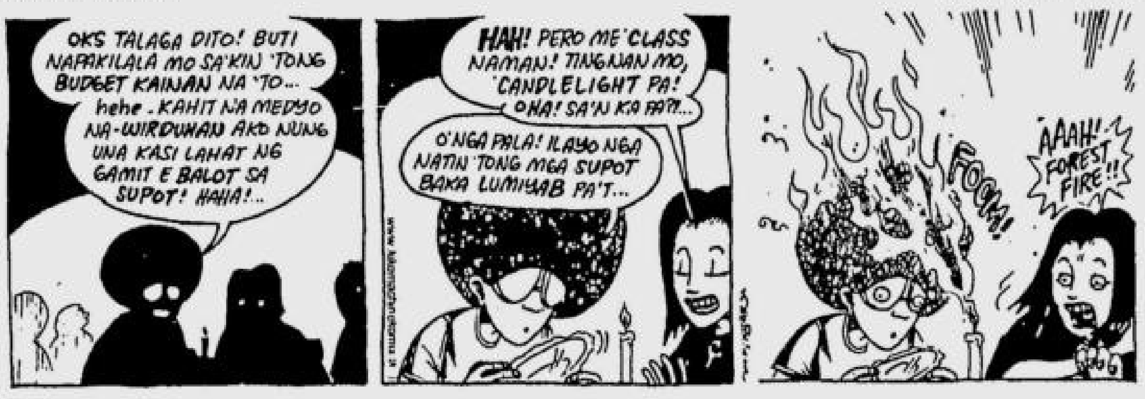
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


?
www.bencomicstrip.com
THEY WERE WILD LEAVES SO I SET THEM FREE...
DANIEL SHELTON 11-5

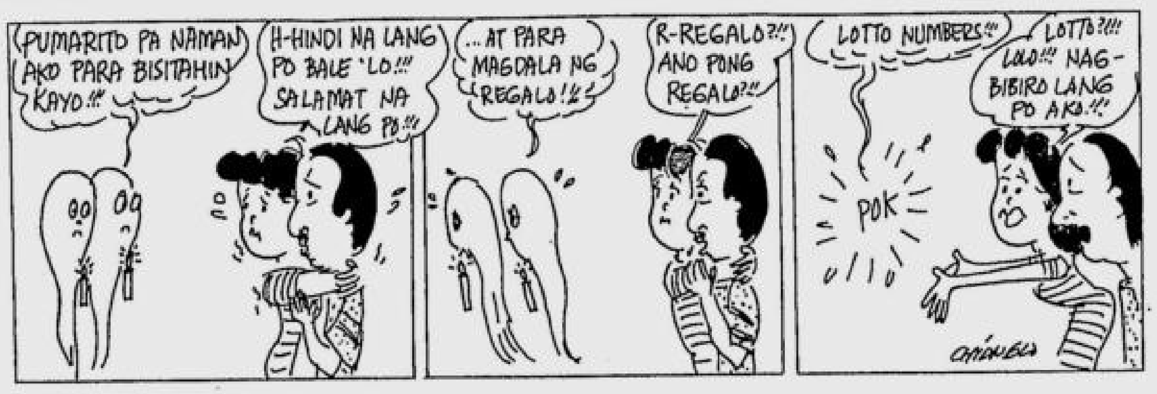
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


OKS TALAGA DITO! BUTI NAPAKILALA MO SA'KIN 'TONG BUDGET KAINAN NA 'TO... hehe. KAHIT NA MEDYO NA-WIRDUHAN AKO NUNG UNA KASI LAHAT NG GAMIT E BALOT SA SUPOT! HAHA!...
HAH! PERO ME'CLASS NAMAN! TINGNAN MO, 'CANDLELIGHT PA!
O'NGA PALA! ILAYO NGA NATIN 'TONG MGA SUPOT BAKA LUMIYAB PA'T...
OHA! SA'N KA PA?!...
FOOM!
AAAH! FOREST FIRE!!

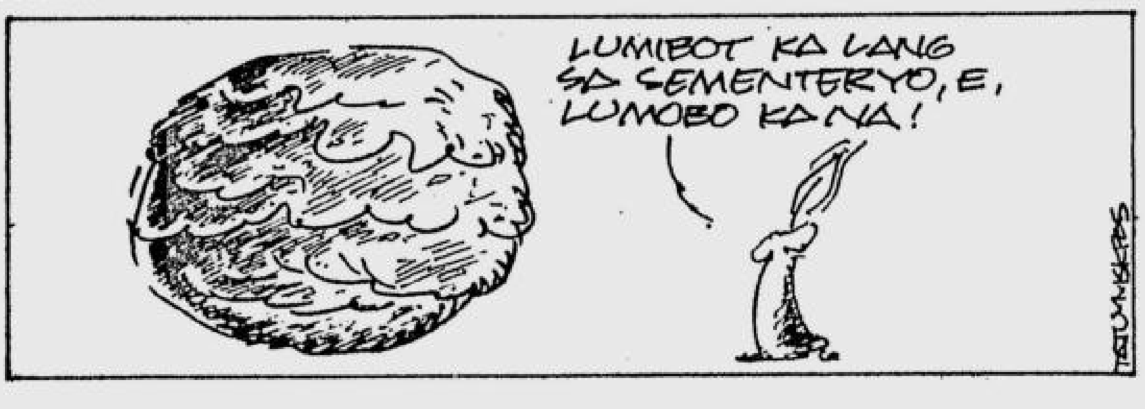
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUMARITO PA NAMAN AKO PARA BISITAHIN KAYO!!!
H-HINDI NA LANG PO BALE 'LO!!! SALAMAT NA LANG PO!!!
...AT PARA MAGDALA NG REGALO!!!
R-REGALO?!! ANO PONG REGALO?!!
LOTTO NUMBERS!!!
POK
LOTTO?!!! LOLO!!! NAG-BIBIRO LANG PO AKO!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


LUMIBOT KA LANG SA SEMENTERYO, E, LUMOBO KA NA!
TATUM/PAPU

The game young people are playing

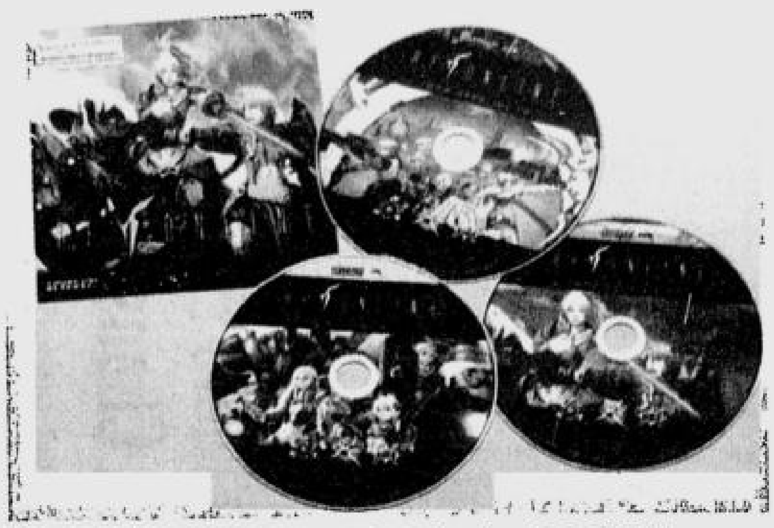
RF ONLINE IS THE FIRST MASSIVE MULTIplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) that presents a unique and spectacular movie-like story whose outcome depends on the performance of the gamers.

This sci-fi story is about three races fighting for supremacy in a galaxy. The conflict revolves around their socio-cultural and racial differences and the compelling need to take control of the Talic mines in planet Novus for their victory and survival.

The players choose a character under any of the three warring racial groups—the Empire of Accretia, the Bellato Union, and the Holy Alliance of Cora—each with equally devastating power and weaponry.

"It's a thinking game," says Myla Rumbaoa, 22, of Bacoor, Cavite. "RF Online hones my skills in planning and strategizing, quick thinking and decision-making, and reacting correctly to crisis situations that the game presents. You'll learn how to deal with the members of your race and convince them to follow you."

The game also enables the players to develop friends through communication. "This is the only game that allows you to compete with your enemies and interact with your allies so you learn a lot about how they think and react. We can also meet personally if we want to," Myla adds.



RF ONLINE, a massive multi-player online role-playing game that's taking the country by storm

Another gamer, Daniel de la Cruz, 24, of Makati City, describes RF.Online as a means to develop social skills, especially in being cooperative and competitive.

"The role-playing in RF Online gives me a very deep sense of pleasure as it develops my skills in dealing with different kinds of players, or people, many of whom I get a chance to meet," Daniel says.

The same is true with Mon Gaite, a businessman and operator of G-Net Internet café in Makati City. "It's the planning, role-playing, teamwork, decision-making, and knowing you're not alone that make the game unique and exciting," Mon says.

While all three of them have chosen the Accretian race, they have different reasons for doing so.

Daniel's childhood fascination with high-tech gadgets lured him into joining the cyborg-like Accretians. Mon, on the other hand, enjoys machine control and interaction the most. Myla, meanwhile, says, "I've chosen to be an Accretian because I don't want to be discriminated upon as a woman. Among the three races, only the Accretians have no gender because of their mechanical bodies. I don't want to be a Corite or a Bellato because their women are very feminine and frail-looking."

Gamer Ramon Rodriguez of Makati City sums it all up, saying: "Gaming is your life in a nutshell. You have your friends and your rivals, goals and dreams, competitions both fierce and friendly. And it's never just a game because gaming is always entirely about you. How you live your life is how you play your games."

To join, visit website www.rfonline.ph.

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Calling young Filipino entrepreneurs

FOR BUBU ANDRES—IMPORTER, DISTRIbutor and retailer of confectionery, novelty items and snacks through her Candy Corner outlets—it took many years of perseverance and creativity before she found the right formula to help her expand, from her first outlet in 1996 to 82 stores (a combination of company-owned and franchises) this year.

Andres and her husband's first venture was importing toys. In 1995, Andres was granted the exclusive distribution for Lisa Frank products, a range of novelty items for young girls. She wanted to open Lisa Frank stores in the malls, but the department stores beat her to the draw.

"Candy Corner was an opportunity born out of a crisis. We didn't want to compete with the retailers on Lisa Frank. We created our own candy store instead, integrating the pick-and-mix concept that was popular in the US with our existing candy products that included novelty candies and brands unknown to local consumers. It clicked!"

For one that has had her share of challenges as a young entrepreneur, including a start-up capital of only P250,000 and a US$10,000 loan in her mid-20s, not to mention a fire that wiped out her entire Christmas inventory, Andres is keen to share her expertise and experience with aspiring young entrepreneurs.

When she is not visiting her corners or attending to the daily operational grind, Andres spends time as Learning Chair of the Philippine chapter of the Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO), a 5,500-member global organization designed to build the world's most influential community of entrepreneurs through dynamic peer-to-peer learning.

Through EO Philippines, which currently has 90 member companies, Andres will be one of the judges and mentors in the recently launched HSBC Young Entrepreneur Awards, a regional business plan-writing competition designed to promote ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit among Filipino university students. The tilt is on its third year in the Philippines, and has been running for many years in Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand.

The competition is open to full-time Filipino university students from public and private colleges and universities nationwide. Competing in teams of two or three, they need to submit an innovative business idea by Nov. 10. Successful teams undergo interactive workshops where they get a chance to interact with some of the most promising young entrepreneurs in the country.

Winners vie for cash prizes up to P500,000, a six-month scholarship to the Asian Institute of Management's Venture into Entrepreneurship Program, a trip to HSBC's regional headquarters in Hong Kong for the regional finals and a one-week study tour to the USA.

Interested teams may log on to www.asiayea.com, click on the Philippines button and complete the online application form. Inquiries may be addressed to HSBC's Public Affairs department at 8305490 or info.ph@asiayea.com. Aside from EO, the AIM's Asian Center for Entrepreneurship and the Philippine Daily Inquirer are also program partners.

BUBU Andres with Candy Corner staff

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Birth Date: M D Y
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Relation to User: ☐ Relative ☐ Professional Caregiver

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	Brand X	Brand Y	Sun Cellular
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REGULAR TEXT RATES			
Text to same network	1.00	1.00	0.50
Text to other networks	1.00	1.00	1.00
INTERNATIONAL TEXT RATES	10.00	15.00	9.00

	Brand X	Brand Y	Sun Cellular
MMS Local	3.00	5.00	2.00
MMS International	20.00	20.00	20.00
DOWNLOADING			
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P125-149	20	20 days
P150	25	30 days